

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

NHL cancels season over labor dispute
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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2005

For many servicemembers, child care is No. 1 issue

Enlisted leaders speak before new military quality-of-life panel Page 7



Learning to live as a triple amputee

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ETHAN HYMAN/The (Raleigh, N.C.) News and Observer
Sgt. Joey Bozick, shown with wife Jayme, lost parts of his legs and right arm when his Humvee rolled over a bomb in Iraq. Bozick says he has never been happier because he has married Jayme.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

N.Y. mail shooting: A preliminary hearing was scheduled Wednesday in Kingston, N.Y., for a man accused of firing dozens of rounds from an assault rifle as he strode into a crowded suburban mall, injuring two men and terrifying shoppers.

Robert Bonelli Jr., 25, was arrested on assault and reckless endangerment charges after he lowered the weapon and surrendered Sunday afternoon at Hudson Valley Mall.

CIA leak investigation: The lawyer for two reporters facing jail for refusing to divulge their sources about the leak of an undercover CIA officer's name says he will challenge a ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ordering them to talk.

Floyd Abrams said he will ask the full appeals court to reverse the order compelling Time magazine's Matthew Cooper and The New York Times' Judith Miller to testify before a federal grand jury about their confidential sources.

The special prosecutor in the case, Chicago U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald, is investigating whether a crime was committed when someone leaked the identity of CIA officer Valerie Plame. Her name was published in a 2003 column by Robert Novak, who cited two senior Bush administration officials as his sources.

Deadly Ky. plant explosion: A fiery explosion that killed seven people and injured 37 at a Corbin, Ky., insulation factory in 2003 could have been prevented if managers and regulators had addressed a buildup of flammable dust, a federal investigation concluded Tuesday.

The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board determined that the Feb. 20, 2003, blast at the CTA Acoustics plant was due to combustible dust that accumulated to unsafe levels and was ignited by an open oven door. The door was left open, the investigators said, the cool was left open because the temperature control had been malfunctioning for several days.

Cuban refugee detentions: Nearly 150 Cuban refugees accused of crimes and imprisoned in the years following the 1980 Mariel boatlift have been released, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

The Miami Herald, citing an unnamed federal official, reported that at least 147 Mariel convicts have been released since last month's Supreme Court decision that found the indefinite detention of illegal immigrants unconstitutional.

Cuban president Fidel Castro in 1980 sent criminals and psychiatric patients to U.S. shores from the port of Mariel, along with thousands of other fleeing Cubans. Some of the refugees were convicted of crimes in the United States.

Va. Route 29 Stalker: A Prince William County, Va., judge on Monday issued a limited gag order in the case of the man accused of being the "Route 29 Stalker" in the mid-1990s. Monday's hearing was one of several pretrial hearings in the case of Darrell D. Rice, 37. Prosecutors believe Rice convinced more than a dozen women to stop in the Route 29 corridor by convincing them there was something wrong with their vehicles.

Snakehead fish: A group of Western coun-



Slaying of missionary: The coffin of American missionary Dorothy Stang is carried Monday in Anapu, Brazil. Thousands of people, from peasants to politicians, gathered to bury Stang, a nun from Ohio who was gunned down Saturday at a settlement where she worked to protect the Amazon rain forest and its poor residents from encroaching loggers and ranchers. On Wednesday, about 2,000 soldiers were being sent to restore order in the region amid escalating violence. As mourners paid their last respects to Stang, 73, two assailants gunned down Daniel Soares da Costa, the former president of Parapub's Rural Workers Union.

ty commissioners who have problems with the Endangered Species Act has petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to have the northern snakehead, an Asian fish that's invaded the East, protected under the act.

The commissioners hope their petition will show lawmakers in the East what problems the act presents to officials in the West. The large, toothy fish has been dubbed the "Frankenfish." It can grow up to 3 feet, breathe air and wriggle across land.

Business

HealthSouth trial: Defense lawyers for Richard Scrushy closed their cross-examination of the prosecution's key witness with

sharp questioning that sought to depict HealthSouth Corp.'s ex-finance chief to jurors in Birmingham, Ala., as a tax-dodging, manipulative liar.

The defense contends that former CFO Bill Owens orchestrated the massive fraud at the rehabilitation giant. Owens maintained that Scrushy was behind the

scheme to overstate earnings by some \$2.7 billion.

World

Kashmir transit: More than a year of peace talks between Pakistan and India bore fruit Wednesday, with the two sides agreeing to start the first bus service between the capitals of divided Kashmir.

The bus service along a rutted mountain road in the folds of the Himalayas will reconnect families separated for decades by the Pakistani and Indian armies. It also raises hopes that these two nuclear-armed neighbors who have fought three wars since gaining independence from Britain in 1947 might one day find a permanent peace.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri said travel would be granted through an "entry permit system" — rather than a passport — once the identities of travelers are verified.

Bird flu outbreak: International efforts to combat bird flu in Asia need to be stepped up to forestall a worldwide pandemic, two U.N.-affiliated agencies warned on Wednesday.

The Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization and the Paris-based World Organization for Animal Health called for funding to help support national anti-bird flu campaigns, especially in the poorest of the affected nations.

Thatcher's son: The son of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher will appear in a South Africa court Friday to answer questions about a botched coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea, his lawyer said Wednesday.

Thatcher, who has lived in South Africa since 1995, pleaded guilty last month to violating South Africa's anti-mercenary laws by unwittingly helping to finance last year's coup attempt in the oil-rich West African nation. He admitted financing a helicopter despite suspicions that it might be used for military purposes.

Cat Stevens case: Two British newspapers said Tuesday they had paid unspecified damages to the singer once known as Cat Stevens over articles suggesting the Muslim convert had links to terrorists.

The musician, now known as Yusuf Islam, said The Sunday Times and The Sun had promised not to repeat the allegation and agreed to pay his legal costs and "substantial damages."

"It seems to be the easiest thing in the world these days to make scurrilous accusations against Muslims, and in my case it directly impacts on my relief work and damages my reputation as an artist," he said in a statement.

Stories and photos from wire services

Corrections

■ A story in Tuesday's editions about a transfer of authority ceremony in Iraq contained incorrect information. The 3rd Infantry Division is based at Fort Stewart, Ga.

■ The story in Tuesday's editions on the Army's new combat badge contained two errors. The Com-

bat Infantryman Badge and the Close Combat Badge are worn on the left-hand breast pocket. Also, unit patches can be worn as combat patches on the right shoulder if the military operation lasted more than 30 days. There is no time-in-theater requirement.

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Shiite leaders fail to agree on candidate

United Iraqi Alliance to choose Friday between al-Jaafari, Chalabi

BY MAGGIE MICHAEL

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Leaders of the Shiite political alliance that won Iraq's election failed to agree on a single nominee for prime minister Wednesday, with the two candidates insisting on a vote by the alliance's 140 parliamentarians, officials said.

After meeting for hours with Shiite cleric and politician Abdel-Aziz al-Hakim, members of the United Iraqi Alliance agreed to hold a secret ballot to choose between two former exiles, Ibrahim al-Jaafari and Ahmad Chalabi, said Ali Hashim al-Youshaa, an alliance leader who attended the meetings. The vote is expected Friday.

But candidates were expected to present their political agendas and priorities to alliance members before the vote, al-Youshaa said.

The failure to reach a consensus revealed cracks within the coalition, which consists of 10 major parties backed by Shiite religious leader Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. But Haydar al-Mousawi, Chalabi's spokesman, denied there was a serious problem.

"No way is there a division inside the alliance. Everybody agreed on adhering to whatever supports the internal elections will reach," he said.

A close aide to al-Sistani, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the alliance leaders will visit his office in Najaf to get his blessing for their choice for prime minister. If they cannot agree, al-Sistani will decide.

If provisional results stand, the alliance, made up of religious Shiite parties, will have 140 seats in the 275-member National Assembly. At least three other party coalitions that won seats in the assembly had joined the alliance's bloc, adding eight more seats, al-Youshaa said. All 149 prospective parliamentarians will vote in the secret ballot, officials said.

Al-Jaafari leads the Dawa Party, known for its close ties to Iran.

Chalabi, 58, leads the Iraqi National Congress and had close ties to the Pentagon before falling out of favor last year after claims he passed intelligence information to Iran.

A secular Shiite, his Iraqi National Congress is an umbrella for groups that included Iraqi exiles, Kurds and Shiites. Much of the intelligence his group supplied on Iraq's alleged weapons of mass destruction programs failed to pan out.

The Kurdish parties have apparently agreed to support the alliance's candidate for prime minister in return for the presidency.



Supporters of Abdel-Aziz al-Hakim, the Shiite alliance's leader, hold aloft his portrait outside his office in Baghdad on Wednesday. Leaders of the winning Shiite political alliance failed to agree on a single nominee for prime minister Wednesday. After hours of closed doors meeting with Shiite cleric and politician al-Hakim, members of the United Iraqi Alliance agreed to hold a secret ballot to choose between Ibrahim al-Jaafari and Ahmad Chalabi, said one of the alliance's leaders who attended the meetings.

Al-Youshaa said both candidates were expected to present their political agendas and priorities to alliance members before the ballot. The race to be the Shiite's pick for prime minister narrowed Tuesday, when Adel Abdul Mahdi, who has close ties to Iran, dropped out.

Al-Hakim, who also has close ties to Iran, has said he is not interested in the prime minister's post.

The competition for the prime minister's post came as the Iraqi Electoral Commission's deadline to file complaints approached.

Commission spokesman Farid Ayar said 25 complaints have been filed so far.

"Most of them are asking for a recount of the votes and we are looking into those requests," he said. "We tell them that we were very accurate in counting the ballots. You know, they just want more votes."

He said he expected the commission to certify the vote totals Thursday, when the official allocation of National Assembly seats

would be announced. The assembly picks the president and two vice presidents, and drafts a new constitution.

Once the results are certified, the present government must set a timetable for installing the new government. It is not known how long that might take, and it will depend on back-room dealmaking among the parties.

The clergy-backed United Iraqi Alliance got 48 percent of the vote for the National Assembly, the Kurdish alliance got 26 percent and interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, a secular Shiite who supported strong ties to Washington, 14 percent. Nine other parties also won seats.

The U.S. military reported Wednesday that a U.S. soldier assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force was killed in action Tuesday in western Iraq.

U.S. forces also clashed with insurgents in Ramadi and Samarra, and militants attacked American convoys with bombs in the northern city of Mosul, damaging a military vehicle. Several people were injured, witnesses said.

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Tuesday, Feb. 15, at least 1,164 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,114 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department.

The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is seven higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. Tuesday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths. Italy has reported 20 deaths; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each. Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,326 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 1,005 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No deaths reported.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ Marine Lance Cpl. Richard A. Perez Jr., 19, Las Vegas; died Thursday in Iraq's Anbar province; assigned to Marine Reserve's 6th Motor Transport Battalion, 4th Force Service Support Group, Las Vegas.

Died Sunday in Balad, Iraq, when their vehicle overturned; assigned to the Army's 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga.

■ Army Spc. Dakota L. Gooding, 21, Ft. Moines, Iowa.

■ Army Sgt. Rene Knox Jr., 22, New Orleans.

■ Army Sgt. Chad W. Lake, 26, Ocala, Fla.

Prime minister candidate al-Jaafari offers moderation

BY MAGGIE MICHAEL

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — The shy family doctor who emerged Tuesday as the most likely candidate to become Iraq's first democratically-elected prime minister says he would make ending the nation's rampant violence his top priority and U.S. troops would remain as long as they were needed to achieve that goal.

In an exclusive Associated Press interview, the moderate Shiite politician, who led a brutal crackdown by Saddam Hussein in 1980, talked about drafting a constitution that will draw not only on Islam for inspiration.

"Islam should be the official religion of the country, and one of the main sources for legislation, along with other sources that do not harm Muslim sensibilities," he said.

Al-Jaafari, who lived in London and is

the leader of the Dawa Party, emerged as the top contender for the prime minister's job Tuesday after his main rival, Adel Abdul Mahdi, dropped out.

Ahmad Chalabi, a former Pentagon favorite, was still in the running, but was considered by many to be a long shot.

"We have two candidates for the alliance, Ahmad Chalabi and Ibrahim al-Jaafari, but al-Jaafari is the most likely to be the alliance candidate," said Humam Hamoudi, a spokesman for the alliance.

In Sunday's results, the United Iraqi Alliance scooped 48 percent of the vote for the National Assembly. The Kurdish alliance took 26 percent and Allawi, a secular Shiite, won only 14 percent.

That could make the Kurds, who like the Shiites were oppressed under Saddam Hussein, the kingmakers in the new Iraq.

The provisional results have yet to be certified by the election commission pending challenges. Once the results are certi-

fied, the present government must set a timetable for installing the new government, a process that could take weeks.

Al-Jaafari, 58, acknowledged that recent deals reached between Iraq's religious parties pointed toward his victory.

"I hear from here and there, but I can't tell to what extent it is a consensus," he said. "I feel like some of our brothers are convinced, but it takes time to reach consensus."

Al-Jaafari said if he is confirmed as prime minister, he would first try to stymie the violence that has crippled the country's recovery from decades of war and hardship.

"The security situation is at the top, as it is a pressing element," al-Jaafari said. He also said he would not push for the United States and its allies to withdraw their troops from Iraq any time soon.

"Blood is being spilled and the land is under attack," he said. "How about if we decided to get these troops out of Iraq?"



Ibrahim al-Jaafari

Kidnapped journalist pleads for life on video

By Todd Pittman
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Sobbing and clapping her hands together in prayer, kidnapped Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena appeared on a new video Wednesday pleading for her life and calling on U.S.-led troops to pull out of Iraq.

"You must end the occupation; it's the only way we can get out of this situation," Sgrena said in the videotape, delivered anonymously to Associated Press Television News.

Rocking back and forth and struggling to hold back tears, Sgrena appeared alone in the brief footage, only her shadow visible on a white background behind her. In the upper left corner of the image, the words "Mujahedeen Without Borders" appeared in digital red Arabic script.

"I ask the Italian government, the Italian people struggling against the occupation, I ask my husband, please, help me," Sgrena said in French. "You must do all you can to end the occupation."

"I'm counting on you, you can help me."

The 56-year-old reporter for the communist daily *Il Manifesto* was kidnapped by unidentified gunmen in a hail of gunfire on Feb. 4 near Baghdad University.

Since then, conflicting claims about her case have appeared on Islamic militant Web sites. One said she had been killed, another said she would soon be released, and yet another said her fate depended on whether Italy would quickly withdraw troops from Iraq.

The Italian Foreign Ministry has said it has doubts about all such Web statements.

In the APTN footage, Sgrena



AP photos

Above: In this image taken from video released Wednesday, a woman who identified herself as kidnapped Italian journalist Giuliana Sgrena appears pleading for her life and calling on U.S.-led troops to pull out of Iraq. Right: A portrait of Florence Aubenais and Sgrena hang on a statue undergoing renovation on Friday in Paris. Aubenais has been missing in Iraq for more than a month.

spoke in both Italian and French and wore a light green jacket and shirt. She appeared in good health, but looked tired and was clearly anxious, locking her fingers together and shaking her hands as if begging.

At one point, her eyes watering as she struggled to recite her message, she waved the camera to stop.

"Nobody should come to Iraq at this time," she said. "Not even journalists. Nobody."

Last week, Sgrena's newspaper said it had indications she is alive

and that intelligence officials had established indirect contact with the kidnappers.

It is not known who kidnapped the journalist. Italy has said it will not pay a ransom to win her release.

"Nobody should come to Iraq at this time. Not even journalists. Nobody."

Giuliana Sgrena
Italian journalist

Italian government officials and Sgrena's colleagues have publicized the journalist's pacifist convictions in hopes it might help win her release.



Il Manifesto strongly opposed the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. It has fiercely criticized Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi's decision to deploy 3,000 troops in the U.S.-led multinational force in Iraq.

More than 190 foreigners have been abducted in Iraq in the past year. At least 13 remain in the hands of their captors, more than 30 were killed and the rest were freed or escaped.

Sgrena is at least the ninth Italian citizen seized in Iraq in recent months.

Italian Senate backs keeping troops in Iraq

ROME — The Senate voted Wednesday to extend Italy's troop deployment in Iraq through June, hours after the nation heard a wrenching, televised appeal by an Italian journalist held hostage in Iraq.

Giuliana Sgrena begged Italians to "put pressure on the government" for the withdrawal of troops. The video, delivered anonymously to Associated Press Television News in Baghdad, was shown repeatedly on Italian networks.

The Senate voted by 141 to 112 to extend funding for the Iraq mission, with one abstention. The motion must now go to the lower house for final approval.

Premier Silvio Berlusconi's center-right coalition has a comfortable majority in both houses of Parliament.

Italy's contingent, which currently includes some 3,250 troops, is one of the largest contributors to the U.S.-coalition.

"Who is asking us not to stay in Iraq? It is the terrorists who are asking," said Domenico Nania, a senator for government coalition partner National Alliance, just before the vote. "What counts today is what is right for the Iraqi people and for this we have to show all our solidarity in this work of reconstruction."

— The Associated Press

Police find 8 bound, gagged corpses north of Baghdad

By Todd Pittman
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Police on Wednesday found the bodies of eight Iraqis, mostly civilians who'd been working at a U.S. military base, gagged and shot in the back of the head north of the Iraqi capital.

Elsewhere, U.S. forces clashed with insurgents in the cities of Ramadi and Samarra, and militants attacked U.S. convoys with bombs in the northern city of Mosul.

The eight Iraqis had been missing since they were kidnapped three days ago by insurgents, said Mohammed Latif, chief of the local police force in Dejal, about 40 miles north of Baghdad.

The bodies were found in shallow graves in a desert area. Each corpse had been tightly bound around the legs and arms, their mouths taped shut. A piece of paper was attached to each body, on which was written: "This is the punishment of the traitors and those who work for the American occupation," Latif said.

Seven of the slain men were last heard from as they were heading from a military base in al-Bakr to their homes in Dejal. An eighth unidentified corpse was discovered along with them, Latif said.

In Ramadi, 70 miles west of the capital, insurgents fired more than 25 mortar rounds at U.S. and Iraqi positions, includ-

ing a group of American troops hunkered in an abandoned glass factory, witnesses said.

The attack sparked clashes in several parts of the city afterward, and American troops sealed off a southeastern district of Ramadi, said resident Hussein Molsch.

There was no word on casualties. U.S. Marine Capt. Brad Gordon denied any clashes had taken place. He said U.S. authorities received a report that insurgents had opened fire, "but coalition forces did not return fire because they could not positively identify either a target or a point of origin."

Doctors at Ramadi's main hospital said at least one Iraqi civilian had been killed in the crossfire.

Clashes between militants and U.S. troops backed by Iraqi National Guardsmen also erupted in Samarra, 60 miles north of Baghdad. One Iraqi was killed and another was wounded, hospital official Alaa Eldin Mohammed said.

In the northern city of Mosul, a car bomb exploded alongside a U.S. military convoy, injuring several people near Mosul's Yarmouk Square, witnesses said. At least one U.S. military vehicle was damaged in the blast. Iraqi and American officials

could not immediately be reached for comment.

In a separate incident, a bomb exploded alongside another U.S. convoy in the east of the city, witnesses said. No casualties were reported in the blast, but American troops opened fire afterward, injuring several people, residents said.

Also in Mosul, three television technicians were injured after a mortar attack on Mosul TV station, an employee there said. In a northern district of the city, gunmen seriously wounded a police colonel and killed his driver in the northern city of Mosul, said Sayed Hussein, a medic at a Mosul hospital where the casualties were brought. The colonel's bodyguard was also wounded in the attack, he said.

In the capital, gunmen shot dead Interior Ministry intelligence officer 1st Lt. Ghazi Hoshi as he was getting into his car to go to work in the southern neighborhood of Dora, said Falah Mohammadawi, a police detective.

In Kirkuk, an Iraqi army colonel, Ibrahim Ahmed, died of wounds suffered after gunmen opened fire on his vehicle west of the city a day earlier, said police Col. Anwar Hassan. Police in Kirkuk also found the severed head of an unidentified man, believed to be Iraqi.

Just north of Baghdad in Baquba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, gunmen killed the head of a local school as she was walking to work, said Col. Mutharrah Shahab of the provincial police force.

In nearby Balad, insurgents attacked a police station with machine-gun fire at dawn, but no casualties were reported, Shahab said.

Also in Diyala province, Iraqi security forces and U.S. troops stormed an insurgent hideout, killing one insurgent and capturing another. One policeman was killed in the raid, Shahab said.

In other violence Tuesday, a U.S. soldier assigned to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force was killed in action in western Iraq, the U.S. military said in a statement from Fallujah on Wednesday.

The military gave no other details of the death.

On Wednesday, two U.S. soldiers died in vehicle accidents, and a third of a non-combat injury, the military said, giving no other details.

Also Tuesday, assassins killed Jassim Mohammed Mousa al-Daraji, a former municipal official and a member of the Iraqi parliament in the eastern Baghdad slum of Sadr City, residents said Wednesday as they gathered for his funeral.

CIA chief offers grist for debate on terror threat

Goss tells Congress al-Qaida focused on attacking U.S.

BY KATHERINE SHRADER

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Al-Qaida and associated groups top the list of threats to the United States, leading government intelligence officials told Congress on Wednesday in a grim assessment that also highlighted Iran's emergence as a major threat to American interests in the Middle East.

Despite gains made against al-Qaida and other affiliates, CIA Director Porter Goss, in an unusually blunt statement before the most secretive Senate Intelligence Committee, said the terror group is intent on finding ways to circumvent U.S. security enhancements to attack the homeland.

"It may be only a matter of time before al-Qaida or other groups attempt to use chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons. We must focus on that," Goss said.

FBI Director Robert Mueller cautioned of the risk posed by radicalized Muslim converts inside the United States and said he worries about a sleeper operative who may have been in place for years, awaiting orders to launch an attack.

"I remain very concerned about what we are not seeing," he said in his prepared remarks.

More than three years since the Sept. 11, 2001, World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks, Goss,

Mueller and other intelligence leaders provided these and other bleak assessments at the annual briefing on threats from around the globe.

Also at the hearing, the head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Vice Adm. Lowell Jacoby, painted Iran as a leading threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East. In his prepared testimony, Jacoby said he believes that Iran will continue its support for terrorism and aid for insurgents in Iraq.

He said the country's long-term goal is to expel the United States from the region, and noted that political reform movements there have lost momentum.

Goss said that Islamic extremists are exploiting the conflict in Iraq and fighters there represent a "potential pool of contacts" to build transnational terror groups. He said the most-wanted terrorist in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, hopes to establish Iraq as a safe-haven to bring about a final victory over the West.

Goss also said that the intelligence community has yet to get to the "end of the trail" of the nuclear black market run by disgraced Pakistani scientist, A.Q. Khan. Goss warned that he doesn't see the possibility that organizations, rather than states, could obtain nuclear, chemical or biological weapons.

He also couldn't assure senators that the United States doesn't face a threat from nuclear weapons that may be missing from Russia.



CIA Director Porter Goss, left, with FBI Director Robert Mueller testifies before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence during a hearing in Washington to examine global threats against the United States.

The rising cost of war

More spent per troop in current efforts than ever before

BY JOHN J. LUMPKIN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With military costs since Sept. 11, 2001, now expected to exceed \$300 billion, the Pentagon is spending more per soldier than it did during earlier conflicts.

High technology, the costs of paying and protecting a modern soldier, and the worldwide nature of the war on terrorism are all possible reasons, experts say.

"Every facet of military expenditure has skyrocketed since the Gulf War," said Loren B. Thompson, a military expert with the Lexington Institute. "The biggest reason why is because the military is more and more a microcosm of the broader economy."

The all-volunteer force, not in place by President Nixon in 1973 to replace the draft, has forced the military to compete with the private sector for soldiers, and offer better pay and benefits, he said. Sending those soldiers to war costs still more.

"The bottom-line problem with the all-volunteer force is you have to convince middle-class people to risk their lives for middle-class pay, so of course the price for each soldier keeps going up," he said.

The Bush administration similarly hopes it can reduce the U.S. troop presence in Iraq in the coming year or two, if Iraqi security forces become more able to handle the insurgency.

The United States spent \$623 billion on the Vietnam conflict, according to the service, using figures adjusted for inflation. If President Bush's new \$81.9 billion emergency request is implemented, U.S. war costs since the Sept. 11 attacks will approach half that.

Still, the United States has 170,000 troops deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, but that will drop to 155,000 in the coming weeks due to a small postelection drawdown in Iraq. During the height of the Vietnam War, more than half a million U.S. soldiers were stationed in Southeast Asia.

Experts offered several reasons why post-Sept. 11 warfare has provided much more expensive per soldier than earlier conflicts: —The U.S. military is more professional and capable than it was 30 years ago, when a significant portion of the soldiers in Vietnam were draftees. Now, it includes far more highly trained technicians running expensive computers and other gear. They are better paid, better trained, better equipped than their predecessors.

"We have much better military than we had back then. We spend more on some kinds of support functions than we did back then," said Steven M. Kosiak at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

■ The military is relying much more on Guard and Reserves than it has in the past during extended conflicts. Their pay comes from the emergency war spending measure, rather than the regular defense budget.

■ The desert conditions of Iraq are wearing on vehicles at a much greater rate than expected, forcing more spending on repairs and replacements.

■ Combat deaths are down compared to previous conflicts, owing to better training, better body and vehicle armor and quick access to emergency medical care, all of which are expensive investments.

■ The global war on terror and the war in Iraq are far-flung ventures that involve protracted deployments to many countries, requiring lots of transport, logistics and communications to many places. U.S. troops have also been sent in smaller numbers to Georgia, Djibouti and the Philippines, among others, to oppose Islamic extremist groups.

"You have to convince middle-class people to risk their lives for middle-class pay, so of course the price for each soldier keeps going up."

Loren B. Thompson

Military expert,
Lexington Institute



A U.S. soldier takes a picture as Afghan National Army soldiers pass by during their graduation parade in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Sunday.

Afghan military seeks high-tech equipment

BY STEPHEN GRAHAM

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — As the United States accelerates its training of Afghanistan's fledgling army, the nation's defense minister has revealed a wish list of high-tech weaponry he says his nation needs to defend itself.

Defense Minister Rahim Wardak told The Associated Press his requests include Apache helicopter gunships and A-10 ground attack planes, which the more than 1,000 American trainers coaching the new Afghan army can currently call in from U.S. bases in an emergency.

He also would like U.S. forces to help create and train Afghan commando, engineer and intelligence units. Transport planes and armored vehicles would also help, Wardak said, and predicted a positive response from Washington.

"Once we improve our capabilities, I think we will be good enough to deal with any sort of internal threat," including Islamic militants, drug smugglers and warlords, Wardak said. "We think if we take more of the burden of security it will be much more economical in terms of money and human life — for the coalition and NATO."

But Wardak and Col. Bob Sharp, a senior official in the U.S.-led coalition, also said Washington and Kabul are considering a long-term security relationship that may include continued American bases.

The office of Lt. Gen. David Barno, the overall commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and the U.S. Embassy in Kabul had no comment.

The U.S. military still has 17,000 soldiers in Afghanistan. Swaths of the countryside remain under the influence of militants or warlords resisting the authority of President Hamid Karzai.

But the re-emergence of the central government and the expansion of both the U.S.-trained Afghan National Army and NATO-led security forces in Afghanistan are easing the burden on the American military, which claims that Taliban-led insurgents are a waning threat.

The Afghan national army had been expected to reach its full strength of 70,000, including 43,000 ground troops, by September 2007.

But Sharp, the British chief of staff of the Office of Military Cooperation, which coordinates the training, said the force could fall strength by the end of 2006.

Triple amputee copes with life after war

BY VALERIE BAUERLEIN

Raleigh News & Observer

WASHINGTON — Joey Bozok crosses his one arm over his body, rifles his backpack for his pillbox. He flips the compartment with his thumb, throws back his head and pops the morphine pill into his mouth.

His wife, Jayme, does not reach to help him.

She stands behind his wheelchair, ruffling his buzz cut. The silver ring on her left hand, gleaming like a chrome bumper, is identical to the one on his left.

They are in their temporary home, a room on the grounds of Walter Reed Army Medical Center. They are smiling.

"I'll tell you this much," said Bozok, one of the Iraq war's three triple amputees. "I've never been happier in my whole life."

Bozok, 26, shipped out last March to Iraq. He was in the desert, in a tent with nine guys, the military police officers he led.

On Oct. 27, he was riding through the desert south of Baghdad when his Humvee rolled over a bomb. His buddies were OK. But Joey lost his right leg above the knee. His left leg, at the knee. His right arm, at the elbow.

They sent him to Germany, to the hospital. Then they sent him home. He woke up in the amputee ward in Walter Reed, in Washington. His girlfriend Jayme, 25, was there.

His hurt where his arm and legs used to be.

"His foot hurt so badly he thought it was

broken. He doesn't remember it, but Jayme does. She stayed most nights in the hospital room.

He could not feed himself, go to the bathroom, turn a page.

Jayme cared for him as he became a child all over again, learning to crawl, to sit, to eat.

One day, he sent them all out, but Jayme.

He told her she was free to go, that he loved her and he always would. She said, as long as you have your head and your heart, that's all I need.

They married on New Year's Eve in the hospital chapel.

People donated a cake, a limo, a suite at the Four Seasons Hotel with couches and champagne and a bathroom made of marble.

She has a job now, an internship as an exercise physiologist at the National Naval Medical Center in nearby Bethesda, Md. It is her last requirement for graduation from Towson A&M University.

He has a job, too, of sorts. Physical therapy, to build his strength and prepare for prosthetic legs. Occupational therapy, to learn to use a wheelchair, to cook one-handed, to write.

Bozok said he's lucky to have gotten injured after his wild days were spent. He sees 18- or 19-year-old amputees in rehab, in the dining hall. They have not had the life he had.

They do not have the girl he has.



ETHAN HYMAN/The (Raleigh, N.C.) News and Observer

"I can't be in a room without touching her," says Sgt. Joey Bozok of his wife, Jayme. The two were married December 31, 2004, two months after Bozok lost both legs and an arm in an explosion in Iraq. Even as a triple amputee, Bozok says he has never been happier, because he has married the woman he loves.

Kurdish cities divided from southern Iraq

BY SCHEHEREZADE

FARAMARZI

The Associated Press

SULAIMANIYAH, Iraq — Persian pop songs blasting from shops compete with Kurdish music from passing cars. Hotel bars and restaurants are packed on the weekends, when people take strolls through peaceful streets.

Kurdish cities like this one in northern Iraq have been largely immune to the kind of violence that much of the country has suffered since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in the spring of 2003.

History and language differences add to Kurdistan's contrast with the rest of Iraq — differences that will become ever more important when a new transitional government takes power, with the largely secular and independence-minded Kurds playing a major role for the first time.

The key difference between "here and there," said columnist Hiwa Osman, is the feeling of responsibility that Kurds have toward their cities and towns.

"If people see a suspicious car," for instance, "they immediately report it to the security forces," Osman said. "In Baghdad or other areas, there's no sense of ownership."

Kurdistan is exempt from a nationwide emergency law that has been in force since November. Law and order is largely self-enforced here, a far cry from the chaos that reigns in the rest of the country.

"First of all, the economic situation is better here, so is the security situation," said Ibrahim Mustafa, a senior official in the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the party that controls Sulaimaniyah.



Fourth grade pupils raise their hands during the Arabic language class at a public school in the village of Hwana, near Sulaimaniyah in the northern Kurdish area of Iraq on Feb. 7. Kurdish children learn Kurdish language in school with only four hours of Arabic in a week.

Mustafa, who studied at Baghdad University in the 1960s, said although he still loves Baghdad, it's too risky a place to venture out unless absolutely necessary.

Almost daily bombings, kidnappings and murders have driven many Baghdad residents to take refuge in Kurdistan.

Here, they find a very different culture.

Plenty of shops sell alcohol openly in Kurdistan, unlike in Arab-populated areas where Islamic extremists have murdered liquor vendors.

Although Saddam's army fought a vicious 1980-1988 war against neighboring Iran, Iranian films and music are popular among Kurdish youth. Most Kurd-

ish youngsters speak Persian, and many were either born or raised in Iran while their parents were exiles during Saddam's regime.

The recent elections, though, have brought out a nascent Iraqi nationalism in some Kurds. "We finally feel we are Iraqis," Osman said. "People feel they have a new identity."

Osman said the constitution, which the new National Assembly is tasked to draft, has to recognize that the Kurds are different from the Arabs, if there is to be national unity.

Most of the younger generation never lived under Saddam, whose genocide against the Kurds led to the deaths of some 200,000 men, women and children. But the ha-

tered fingers, even among the youths who have never felt a part of Iraq.

Still, there are signs that the young generation may be ready to bridge the gap between Kurdistan and the rest of Iraq.

Ninth-grader Bafnir Najib wants to learn Arabic so she can understand the subtitles to the TV films. She also wants to understand the language of her fellow citizens.

"I am very sad that I don't know Arabic," she said in English.

"I went to Baghdad and I couldn't speak a word of Arabic. We are in Iraq, we have to speak it. We are also Iraqis, not Turkish," she said.

For 13 years since the end of the first Gulf War, Kurds lived in a semi-autonomous region under Western aerial protection, and Kurdish language and customs ruled.

At the very least, the Kurdish parties now want a secular, democratic and federal Iraq that will protect the freedoms they already have.

With their newfound cult, they may well get what they want.

The religious, majority Shiite Muslims were by far the biggest vote-getters in the Jan. 30 election. But because a two-thirds majority is needed to control the legislature, the Kurds, who make up about 15 percent of Iraq's population, are in a powerful position to shape a new government.

Many Sunni Arabs, who comprise an estimated 20 percent, stayed home on election day, either out of fear of violence or to support a boycott call by radical clerics opposed to the U.S. military.

Valentines even in a war zone

BY MIKE DORNING

Chicago Tribune

MOSUL, Iraq — After a Valentine's Day dinner for two served on a footlocker, Spec. Nicole Jirtle said "yes" to Sgt. Damon Schroeder's marriage proposal Monday.

The couple, who are deployed at Camp Marez and were profiled by the Chicago Tribune, plan to get married next year, after the end of their tours of duty in Iraq with the 113th Engineering Battalion of the Indiana National Guard.

With glowing military chemical lights setting the mood, Schroeder said he sat next to his girlfriend after dinner.

"He grabbed my hand and said, 'Will you marry me?' I said 'Yes' and hugged him for so long," said Jirtle, 21, of Gary, Ind.

The couple later went to a phone trailer and contacted relatives back in Indiana.

Schroeder, 28, of LaPorte, Ind., drives trucks for the battalion, and Jirtle is a medic.

The two soldiers met six months ago during the Guard unit's two-week summer field exercises at Camp Atterbury, Ind., and started dating soon afterward.

Their unit arrived in Iraq for a one-year deployment in December.

Child care is No. 1 concern for troops

BY LISA BURGESS

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Child care is the No. 1 concern for service members and their families, three of the military's four top enlisted leaders told members of a new House committee that focuses exclusively on quality-of-life issues.

Inadequate family housing was second.

"Child care has been a huge challenge," Sgt. Major of the Army Kenneth Preston said Wednesday.

"If you look at the demographics, most spouses today work, [so] the need for child care is very high."

Sgt. Major of the Marine Corps John Estrada also called child care "the No. 1" issue, with "housing as a close second."

Enlisted leaders say adequate housing also is problem

The Marine Corps is only meeting 68 percent of its child care needs, Estrada said.

In order to meet a Defense Department-mandated standard of providing child care for at least 80 percent of those servicemembers who require it, "we'll need at least another 100,000 [child care] spaces," Estrada said.

"Well into the thousands" of child care slots are required in the Air Force, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald Murray said, listing the issue as the "largest complaint" by airmen, also followed by inadequate housing.

As for the Navy, "there are

6,485 for children under 12 on the waiting list," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Terry Scott, although he ranked child care second on his list of priorities.

"Housing is No. 1 on my list" out of "concern for our single sailors, and our ability to house them," Scott said.

The four leaders spoke during the first meeting of the House Appropriations Committee's new Military Quality of Life Subcommittee.

which brings under one umbrella housing, health care, education, and other matters that used to be scattered among several House subcommittees.

The issues discussed at the meeting, subcommittee chairman Rep. James Walsh, R-N.Y., pledged, "will set the tone for this committee over the coming year" as the Pentagon's fiscal 2006 budget proposal works its way through Congress.

Moving house

Often citing personal experience, the four service leaders joined together in asking the subcommittee to consider revising the current limits on shipping household goods.

"Anecdotally, between 60 and 70 percent" of the hundreds of enlisted sailors Scott said he has informally polled have had to throw, give away, or sell personal belongings to meet weight requirements, the Navy leader said.

"A lot of those policies and regulations were established decades ago, and how soldiers live has changed," Preston said. When it comes to "weight allowances for

household goods, there are some inequities there ... we'd like to see changed." "If you ask us ... if we could increase our household goods, yes we would," the Air Force's Murray agreed.

Scott also told the subcommittee about delays of 90 to 120 days that servicemembers must endure before receiving delivery of private motor vehicles shipped to an overseas duty station, as well as "the inconvenience of having to store or sell a vehicle because you're going to Alaska or Hawaii, and you can only ship one vehicle."

E-mail Lisa Burgess at: burgess@stripes.osd.mil

NORAD tests laser warning system

BY LESLIE MILLE

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is considering using lasers to warn pilots they've flown into restricted airspace, an unusual



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choice because the government also says terrorists might use the beams of light to blind pilots as they approach airports.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, has been researching the use of alternating red and green lasers as a way to communicate with pilots flying too near the Capitol or the White House when they can't be reached by radio.

NORAD tried the ground-based laser signals on a test plane flying into Washington's Reagan National Airport last Friday. The low-intensity lights are safe for the eyes, the command said in a statement.

If the system becomes operational, the Federal Aviation Administration would send a special notice to pilots describing the lights and telling them what to do if they see them.

Retired airline Capt. Steve Luckey on Tuesday called the warning system "a step in the right direction — as long as they

can show they're prudent or safe."

Luckey, who chairs the national security committee for the Air Line Pilots Association International, has long been alarmed about reports of powerful green laser beams projected into cockpits. An FAA study concluded that lasers could cause a plane to crash.

Beginning in December, the FBI investigated a rash of incidents around the country in which lasers were shined through cockpit windows. Though no links to terrorism were found, the government said in January it would require pilots to report immediately any lasers beamed at air planes.

Such notification would allow air traffic controllers to broadcast warnings and quickly notify law enforcement officers.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, hundreds of small planes have flown within the restricted airspace around the capital — a 15-mile radius around the Washington Monument.

Sub named for Carter to hit seas

Stars and Stripes

The Navy will commission its newest nuclear-powered attack submarine Jimmy Carter on Saturday at Naval Submarine Base Groton, Conn.

President Carter is the only U.S. president to have qualified in submarines. He served in the Navy for seven years.

Carter graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1946, served as a commissioned officer aboard submarines, and served as command-in-chief from 1977 to 1981. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

In a time-honored Navy tradition, former first lady Rosalynn Carter will give the first order to "man our ship and bring her to life!" according to the Navy News Service.

The Jimmy Carter is the third and final submarine of the Seawolf class.

Capt. Robert D. Kelso will serve as Jimmy Carter's first command officer, leading a crew of 130 officers and sailors.



This painting by artist Jeff Bass shows a C-119 "Flying Boxcar," commissioned by the Fairchild Corp., to commemorate the role of CIA-sponsored civilian pilots in resupplying besieged French forces at Dien Bien Phu in the spring of 1954.

Covert U.S. aviators will get French award for heroism

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In the spring of 1954, Allen L. Pope risked life and limb to fly covert Central Intelligence Agency resupply missions to besieged French forces in what is now Vietnam. But the thing he recounts most vividly is not the dangers he faced. It's the heroism of the French troops he was helping.

"This is what I'll always remember: the way they fought. There were men without hands, men without legs, men without feet, men that were blinded," he says. "They were catching hell."

They caught it at Dien Bien Phu, a cluster of villages in a valley ringed by mountains near the Laotian border. Communist rebels on higher ground pummeled the French with artillery in an epic battle that marked the end of French colonial rule in In-

dochina and foreshadowed the U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

Next week, nearly 51 years after the fall of Dien Bien Phu, the seven surviving American pilots who braved those perilous skies — but later were essentially disowned by the CIA — will be awarded the Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, or Legion of Honor, France's highest award for service.

Six of the seven will gather at the official residence of French Ambassador Jean-Denis LeVite for a Feb. 24 ceremony to commemorate an important chapter in the history of U.S.-French relations.

"It's a nice gesture on their part," says Douglas R. Price, who was 29 years old when he flew 39 airdrop missions to Dien Bien Phu in April and May 1954 as a civilian employee of Civil Air Transport, a flying service whose undeclared owner was the CIA.

IN THE STATES

House OKs increasing indecency fines

BY GENARO C. ARMAS

The Associated Press

The House on Wednesday overwhelmingly approved a dramatic increase in fines for indecent programming, rejecting criticism the penalties will stifle free speech and homogenize radio and TV broadcasts.

Supporters said stiffer penalties are needed to give deep-pocketed broadcasters more incentive to clean up their programs and to help assure parents that their children won't be exposed to inappropriate material.

The measure, which passed 389-38, boosts the maximum fine from \$32,500 to \$500,000 for a company and from \$11,000 to \$500,000 for an individual entertainer.

The bill enjoyed broad bipartisan support from lawmakers upset about incidents like Janet Jackson's breast-baring "wardrobe malfunction" at the 2004 Super Bowl halftime show.

"This is a penalty that makes broadcast-

Recommends maximum fines of \$500,000

ers sit up and take notice," said Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee that sent the bill to the full House. "This legislation makes great strides in making it safe for families to come back into their living rooms."

The White House, in a statement, said it strongly supports the legislation that "will make broadcast television and radio more suitable for family viewing."

The Senate is considering a similar bill. Any differences in the two will have to be worked out before it goes to President Bush for a signature.

Opponents said they were concerned stiffer fines by the Federal Communications Commission would lead to more self-censorship by broadcasters and entertainers unclear about the definition of "indecent."

They cited the example of several ABC affiliates that last year did not air the World War II drama "Saving Private Ryan" because of worries that violence and profanity would lead to fines, even though the movie already had aired on network TV.

"We would put Big Brother in charge of deciding what is art and what is free speech," said Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., who opposed the bill. "We would see self- and actual-censorship rise to new and undesirable heights."

A similar bill easily won House passage last year, but lawmakers couldn't work out a compromise agreement with the Senate, which approved a different version.

The Federal Communications Commission has stepped up enforcement of the indecency statute, perhaps most notably with a \$550,000 fine against CBS for its

2004 Super Bowl broadcast that included Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction." Radio personality Howard Stern also has been a frequent target.

Fines for indecent programming exceeded \$7.7 million last year.

Four years ago, FCC fines totaled just \$48,000.

The FCC has wide latitude to impose fines. It can fine an individual company, groups of stations owned by a company and individual entertainers. In the case of CBS, it imposed a fine of \$27,500 against each of 25 stations owned by the network.

All five members of the FCC — three Republicans and two Democrats — favor greatly increasing the fines.

The House bill allows the FCC to fine an individual entertainer, such as a disc jockey, without first issuing a warning, which is the case now. The FCC has never before issued such a fine.

Several Democrats contended the bill would curb free speech and cause more broadcasters and entertainers to censor themselves.

Pipe bomb found

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — A pipe bomb was found and safely dismantled at a Department of Motor Vehicles office Tuesday — the latest in what is being investigated as a string of possible ecoterrorist incidents in communities east of Sacramento.

In the same community of Auburn, a different type of homemade explosive was found and dismantled Sunday outside the Placer County Courthouse. No one claimed responsibility for either incident, the FBI said.

The FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force is now investigating five incidents. The earliest occurred Dec. 27 and two have been claimed as the work of the Earth Liberation Front, a radical environmental group.

Girl accused of killing

ST. LOUIS — A 12-year-old girl has been charged with murder under juvenile law for allegedly killing her 9-year-old sister, apparently in a dispute over a hamburger.

A family court judge will determine if the girl should be tried as an adult, but no date has been set for that proceeding, said Kathryn Herman, assistant administrator for the St. Louis Family Court. A detention hearing is set for Wednesday.

On Feb. 1, a social worker told police the 12-year-old was in a hospital psychiatric unit, suffering visions and nightmares, and had told the staff she strangled her sister during a quarrel over a hamburger, police told the Post-Dispatch.

Grabham said those statements and the 9-year-old's injuries led him to determine the cause of death was strangulation. "No other condition reasonably explains her death," he said.

From The Associated Press

FDA promises swift action on drug safety

BY RANDOLPH E. SCHMID

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Food and Drug Administration promised prompt action Wednesday on recommendations from advisory committees probing the safety of popular painkillers, but urged the advisers to balance the risks and benefits of the drugs.

Vioxx was pulled from the market Sept. 30 after a long-term clinical trial indicated some patients suffered heart attacks or strokes. Similar safety questions have arisen concerning the related drugs Celebrex and Bextra.

The advisory committees are hearing from government officials, physicians, researchers and the public in three days of meetings before voting on recommendations for these prescription drugs, known as Cox-2 inhibitors.

The committee could make a range of recommendations including limiting these drugs to people not known to be at risk of heart problems, reducing the dose or duration of use, requiring tougher warning labels and even taking the drugs off the market.

Dr. Steven Galson, acting director of the FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, said the agency will act rapidly — in the next few weeks — on the committee recommendations. The FDA is not required to accept such recommendations, but generally does.

Galson reminded the group that the drugs in question are important painkillers widely used by people in chronic pain. It is important to balance the risks of drugs with their benefits, he said.

A drug that has a positive risk-benefit balance for the population as a whole, Galson added, may still cause serious problems for some individuals.

The FDA has been criticized for being slow to recognize problems with these drugs.

However, committee chairman Dr. Alastair J. Wood of Vanderbilt University stressed as he opened the session that the committee "is not here to delegate blame or revisit the past."

Vioxx was withdrawn by its manufacturer, Merck & Co. Celebrex and Bextra, made by Pfizer Inc., re-



Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt announces on Tuesday that the FDA will establish a new independent board to monitor FDA-approved medicines once they're on the market.

main on the market.

Dr. Garrett A. Fitzgerald of the University of Pennsylvania told the committees that just as low-dose aspirin affords heart protection and a small but definite risk of stomach and intestinal problems, so the Cox-2 inhibitors "afford gastrointestinal protection and a small but absolute risk of cardiovascular events."

Fitzgerald said the fact that heart problems have been seen in all three Cox-2 drugs in five clinical trials indicates that the problem is with the class of drugs, not an individual drug.

Other drugs in the class are awaiting approval and are likely to face increased requirements to win the right to be sold, he said.

It would be logical, he said, to require the existing Cox-2 drugs to pass the same new hurdles to retain their approval.

On Tuesday, the Health and Human Services Department announced that the FDA will establish a new Drug Safety Oversight Board to monitor medicines once they're on the market and emerging information on risks and benefits.

Defrocked priest trial nears end

The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Jurors began deliberations Wednesday following closing arguments in the trial of a former priest accused of sexually molesting an altar boy, who shot the cleric on a city street a decade after the alleged abuse.

Maurice Blackwell, 58, who did not testify, faces up to 60 years in prison if convicted of molesting Dontee Stokes, 29, who served home detention on a gun charge for attacking the former Roman Catholic priest.

In their closing arguments, defense attorneys portrayed Stokes as a disturbed young man who made up the allegations to deal with a sexual identity crisis, and the prosecution called him a vulnerable victim preyed upon by a trusted father figure.

Stokes admitted in court that he has had trouble distinguishing between fantasy and reality at times, but firmly maintained he was sexually abused in Blackwell's residence at the rectory of St. Edwards Church in Baltimore.

Prosecutor Jo Anne Stanton said Stokes' mental problems coincided with the alleged abuse, which Stokes said started in 1989, when he was 13. She said it was unusual for an abused child to "question... what is real..."

Blackwell was stripped of his church authority after acknowledging he had a sexual relationship with a teenage boy in the early 1970s.



Blackwell

Skulls found decades ago are oldest humans

BY MALCOLM RITTER
The Associated Press

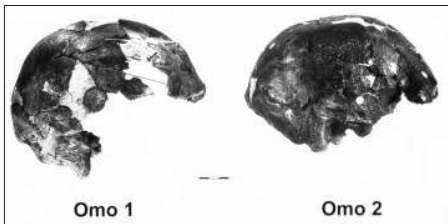
NEW YORK — A new analysis of bones unearthed nearly 40 years ago in Ethiopia has pushed the fossil record of modern humans back to nearly 200,000 years ago — perhaps close to the dawn of the species.

Researchers determined that the specimens are around 195,000 years old. Previously, the oldest known fossils of Homo sapiens were Ethiopian skulls dated to about 160,000 years ago.

Genetic studies estimate that Homo sapiens arose about 200,000 years ago, so the new research brings the fossil record more in line with that, said John Fleagle of Stony Brook University in New York, an author of the study.

The fossils were found in 1967 near the Omo River in southwestern Ethiopia. One location yielded Omo I, which includes parts of a skull plus skeletal bones. Another site produced Omo II, which has more of a skull but no skeletal bones. Neither specimen has a complete face.

Although Omo II shows more primitive



Two partial skulls unearthed in Ethiopia in 1967 are seen in this undated photo. The skulls are about 195,000 years old, making them the earliest known well-dated remains of anatomically modern humans, called Homo sapiens, a new analysis says.

characteristics than Omo I, scientists called both specimens Homo sapiens and assigned a tentative age of 130,000 years.

Now, after visiting the discovery sites, analyzing their geology and testing rock samples with more modern dating techniques, Fleagle and colleagues report in Thursday's issue of the journal *Nature* that both specimens are 195,000 years old, give or take 5,000 years.

Fleagle said the more primitive traits of Omo II may mean the two specimens came from different but overlapping Homo sapiens populations, or that they just represent natural variation within a population.

To find the age of the skulls, the researchers determined that volcanic rock lying just below the sediment that contained the fossils was about 196,000 years old. They then found evidence that the fossil-bearing sediment was deposited soon after that time.

Paul Renne, director of the Berkeley

Geochronology Center, which specializes in dating rocks, said the researchers made "a reasonably good argument" to support their dating of the fossils.

"It's more likely than not," he said, calling the work "very exciting and important."

Rick Potts, director of the Human Origins Program at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History, said he considered the case for the new fossil ages "very strong." The work suggests that "we're right on the cusp of where the genetic evidence says the origin of modern humans... should be," he said.

G. Philip Rightmire, a paleoanthropologist at Binghamton University in New York, said he believes the Omo fossils show Homo sapiens plus a more primitive ancestor. The find appears to represent the aftermath of the birth of Homo sapiens, when it was still living alongside its ancestral species, he said.

New Homeland chief sworn in

WASHINGTON — Michael Chertoff was sworn in Tuesday as the nation's second Homeland Security secretary, hours after the Senate placed the tough-on-terrorism former prosecutor in charge of a bureaucracy prone to infighting and turf wars.

Chertoff replaces Tom Ridge, who stepped down Feb. 1.

Fatal bus crash report issued

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Federal investigators have determined that faulty repair work on a bus contributed to an October accident that killed 15 people traveling to a Mississippi casino.

A garage fire had damaged the Walters Charter and Tours motorcoach some time before the accident, the National Transportation Safety Board said Tuesday. The roof was repaired poorly, with many misaligned rivet points and corrosion, the NTSB said.

Plea in L.A. train wreck case

LOS ANGELES — The man accused of causing a deadly train wreck during an aborted suicide attempt last month pleaded not guilty to 11 counts of murder that could bring the death penalty.

Juan Manuel Alvarez, 25, parked an SUV on the tracks Jan. 26 but lost his nerve and jumped out in time to see two commuter trains crash in suburban Glendale, authorities said.

Hospital passes inspection

LOS ANGELES — The only public hospital in gang-ridden South Los Angeles has passed a new federal inspection, lifting the threat of losing \$200 million a year in Medicare funding, county officials said.

From The Associated Press



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Report: Tax hike, education = cleaner water

BY FARM SKOLOFF
The Associated Press

FRESNO, Calif. — An environmental group has proposed a tax hike on pesticides that would fund classes for California farmers on how to reduce the amount of toxic runoff in the state's water supply.

Gary Wolff, chief economist at the Oakland-based Pacific Institute, an environmental research group, said farmers who enroll in such classes could receive rebates that make up for the 7.9 percent tax increase.

"They would actually be making money," said Wolff, who wrote the institute's Feb. 8 report, "Investing in Clean Agriculture."

Urban buyers of all sorts of chemicals, such as chlorine for pools, also would pay the added tax and bear some of the costs for the classes, the report says.

Pesticides are taxed in California at 2.1 percent of wholesale value. The group wants to increase that to 10 percent. The tax would last three years, then revert to 2.1 percent.

"It is, in our opinion, the only way to escape long-term social forces that could be very detrimental to farms and farmers and food security," the report says.

Pesticide use in California in 2003 jumped 4 percent from a

year earlier, to about 175 million pounds, according to the state Department of Pesticide Regulation.

"Pesticide expenditures as a percent of profit have been rising steadily," Wolff said. "By getting a handle on when and where they are using less pesticides, farmers are going to improve their bottom line."

Farmer David Sarabian, who grows peaches, plums, nectarines and grapes in the San Joaquin Valley, said new taxes are not necessary.

"We're an educated group of people," he said. "We know there are alternatives and sometimes you use them, and sometimes they are cost-prohibitive."

Wolff's report says similar tax increases have worked elsewhere.

In Denmark, a program started in 1986 reduced pesticide use by more than 50 percent within 10 years, the report found.

Glenn Brank, spokesman for the state Department of Pesticide Regulation, said Wolff's plan is too complicated and doesn't account for the need for people to organize classes and distribute funds.

Brank said the department is working on a plan for more environmentally sound pest management practices.



Farm owner David Sarabian applies a low-grade pesticide to orchard trees Monday at his ranch in Fresno, Calif. A study by chief economist Gary Wolff at the Oakland-based Pacific Institute suggests hiking the tax on pesticides and using the extra money to educate farmers on how to reduce toxic runoff.

Coffee may help thwart liver cancer

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Researchers in Japan have discovered some eye-opening news about coffee: It may help prevent the most common type of liver cancer.

A study of more than 90,000 Japanese found that people who drank coffee or nearly every day had half the liver cancer risk of those who never drank coffee. The protective effect occurred in people who drank one to two cups a day and increased at three to four cups.

Animal studies have suggested a protective association of coffee with liver cancer, so the research team led by Monami Inoue of the National Cancer Center in Tokyo analyzed a 10-year public health study to determine coffee use by people diagnosed with liver cancer and people who did not have cancer.

"We found the likely occurrence of liver cancer in people who never or almost never drank coffee was 547.2 cases per 100,000 people over 10 years.

But for people who drank coffee daily the risk was 214.6 cases per 100,000, the researchers report in this week's issue of the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

They were unable to compare the effect of regular and decaffeinated coffee, however, because decaf is rarely consumed in Japan. The caffeine in coffee has been shown in other studies to prompt mental alertness in many drinkers, although it makes some people nervous. Some studies have suggested caffeine aggravates symptoms of menopause or intensifies the side effects of some antibiotics.

Heavy caffeine use has been linked to miscarriage. But studies have also shown that a skin cream spiked with caffeine lowers the risk of skin cancer in mice. The authors note that the study needs to be repeated in other groups. The Japanese study was funded by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare of Japan. The U.S. study was funded by the National Institutes of Health.



The Coffee Grinder in the Westminster (Md.) Shopping Center offers over 50 varieties of coffee beans. Researchers in Japan have discovered some eye-opening news about coffee: It may help prevent the most common type of liver cancer.

Study: Prenatal pollutant exposure may be linked to genetic changes

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A study of New York City newborns suggests that prenatal exposure to air pollution may be linked to genetic changes associated with an increased risk of cancer, researchers said Tuesday.

The study by Columbia University followed 60 newborns and their non-smoking mothers in low-income neighborhoods, primarily in Harlem and the Bronx.

Their exposure to combustion-related pollutants caused primarily by vehicles was measured by backpack air monitors worn by the women during the third trimester of their pregnancies. When the babies were born, genetic alterations were measured.

Researchers found about a 50 percent increase in the level of persistent

genetic abnormalities in the infants who had the higher levels of exposure, said Dr. Frederica Perera, director of the center and senior author of the study.

"We already knew that air pollutants significantly reduced fetal growth, but this is the first time we've seen evidence that they can change chromosomes in utero," Perera said.

She said the kind of genetic changes that occurred have been linked in other studies to increased risk of cancer.

The study, published in the *Journal of Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers and Prevention*, is part of a broader multi-year research project started in 1998 that examines the health effects of exposure of pregnant women and babies to air pollutants, pesticides and smoking.

Confiscating sentimental items

CITY, Texas — A Texas company is adding a service at some airports to prevent airline passengers from losing sentimental items confiscated as potential weapons.

League City-based ReturnKey Systems has developed automated mailing kiosks that are being set up in major international airports to allow travelers to mail home items forbidden aboard aircraft. They are already at Newark, Washington Dulles, New York LaGuardia and Houston's Bush Intercontinental airports. More airports are scheduled to receive the kiosks throughout the year, the company said.

T-Mobile hacker pleads guilty

LOS ANGELES — A hacker who broke into the network of T-Mobile USA Inc. and accessed personal information on hundreds of customers including a Secret Service agent has pleaded guilty to a felony hacking charge.

Nicholas Lee Jacobsen, a 21-year-old computer engineer who now lives in Oregon, entered his plea Tuesday in U.S. District Court

in Los Angeles. He faces up to five years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine when he is sentenced May 16.

The break-in targeted the network of Bellevue, Wash.-based T-Mobile USA, which has 16.3 million customers nationwide. It was discovered during a Secret Service investigation.

Three arrested on gun charges

SEATTLE — Federal agents have arrested three men on gun and explosives charges, including a white supremacist who once served time for plotting to kill Martin Luther King Jr.

Keith Gilbert, 65, was taken into custody Tuesday at his home in Seattle's University District. FBI spokeswoman Robbie Burroughs said. His associate, William D. Heinrich, 50, was arrested at a nearby home.

A court complaint said Gilbert, a former follower of late Aryan Nations founder Richard Butler, sold automatic AK-47 machine guns and other weapons to a confidential informant working with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

From The Associated Press

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Mississippi celebrates B.B. King

Blues legend is moved to tears

BY EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS

The Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. — Blues great B.B. King pulled a white handkerchief from his pocket and wiped away tears as the state House and Senate declared Tuesday to be B.B. King Day. "I never learned to talk very well without Lucille," King said, speaking of his black Gibson guitar. "But today, I'm trying to say only God knows how I feel. I am so happy. Thank you."

Lawmakers and Gov. Haley Barbour honored the 79-year-old Delta native during a standing-room-only ceremony in the Senate chamber.

King, whose hits include "The Thrill is Gone," said it was the first time he had set foot in the Mississippi Capitol.

Outside, King was mobbed by fans seeking autographs and pictures. He graciously indulged the requests, even signing a candy-apple red Fender electric guitar for Ben Thompson, chief of staff for Lt. Gov. Amy Tuck.

"Signing guitars that are not Gibson is like being married and kissing a woman who is not your wife," King said with a smile.

Arkansas Lt. Gov. Winthrop Paul Rockefeller attended the ceremony, and stayed to get a picture with King.

The singer and guests were treated to lunch at the Governor's Mansion. During an after-lunch interview in his limousine, King said his home state, which once struggled with racial oppression, has come "night and day" changes over the decades.



Sen. David Jordan, D-Greenwood, right, holds aloft a House resolution honoring blues legend and Miss. native B.B. King, left, who waves to a packed Senate Chamber in Jackson, Miss. The state, which once struggled with racial oppression, declared Tuesday to be B.B. King Day.

"I feel like the prodigal son and they have killed the fattest calf," he said. "I am having the time of my life. I thought when I got married it was the happiest time. I thought when I had my first child it was the happiest time. Those were great times."

"This has been the most beautiful day of my life."

Riley B. King was born Sept. 16, 1925, on a cotton plantation in Berclair, outside Itta

Bena. He earned the nickname "B.B." — for Beale Street Blues Boy or just Blues Boy — during his early career in Memphis, Tenn.

King has earned 13 Grammy awards and has been inducted into the Blues Foundation Hall of Fame and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

He has sold more than 40 million records worldwide, and Barbour said there are "more to come — because the thrill is not gone."

Westminster crowns Carlee

BY BEN WALKER

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — In the dog show world, they call it a "free stack." That's when a pooch strikes a pose, holds perfectly still and tries to win over the judge.

Just the way a German shorthaired pointer did it Tuesday night.

Standing like the very symbol of the Westminster Kennel Club, a 5-year-old female called Carlee won best in show at America's most prestigious canine event.

"She was spectacular," star handler Michelle Ostermiller said.

With soft eyes and a gliding gait that she mastered by running three to four miles a day, Carlee beat out a popular Norfolk terrier, a champion bloodhound and a wobbling Pekinese.

All seven finalists gave fine performances on the green carpet of Madison Square Garden. But the sellout crowd and judge Lynette Saltzman were clearly won over by Carlee's stack.

Paying rapt attention to Ostermiller, Carlee pointed with perfection as the cheers grew louder and louder. A living statue for a good 10 seconds — it seemed like an eternity.

"She owned the ground she stood over," USA Network host David Frei said later.

Last year, Ostermiller neatly guided a big Newfoundland named Josh to this best in show title. This time, she came back to be the tops among the 2,581 entries in 165 breeds and varieties.

"I'm stunned," she said. Official named Ch. Kan-Point's VJK Autumn Roses. Carlee won the sporting group earlier in the evening and wound up with her ninth best in show title overall.



Carlee, a German shorthaired pointer, competes Tuesday in the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show in New York. Carlee, handled by Michelle Ostermiller, won best in show.

A sprightly Norfolk terrier named Coco represented the terriers.

She was the favorite at Westminster last year, and came back this time at 6½ years old after taking off six months to deliver three puppies — Tom, Dick and Harry.

Knotty, a bloodhound that won the AKC/Eukanuba show last month, was trying to become the first hound in 22 years to take best in show at Westminster. Instead, he's headed home to Topanga Canyon, Calif.

A Pekinese called Jeffrey was the toy winner.

Fans open wallets at Kennedy auction

New York Daily News

NEW YORK — The frenzy over Jackie Kennedy Onassis' bric-a-brac soared to new heights Tuesday, with a lowly doorstop selling for \$4,800 on the opening day of a three-day auction.

In a day of brisk bidding, an oak rocking chair — one of several President Kennedy used for his ailing back — went for \$96,000 to an anonymous telephone bidder.

A sugar bowl, which carried a presale estimate of \$100 to \$150, was sold for \$7,200. The prices include a 20 percent buyer's premium. By day's end, the second Sotheby's auction of Jackie O's possessions in nine years had brought in \$1,747,620, much more than the \$1 million experts had predicted for the entire catalogue.

With two days to go in the auction, it's clear the Kennedy name still carries some magic, transforming garage-sale items into highly sought remnants of Camelot.

The cast-iron doorstop in the form of a basket of posies, for example, was estimated to fetch only \$60 to \$80.

"It was pretty, and I like flowers," said winning bidder Melinda Cohen, 50 of Manhattan, a Jackie admirer. "I had to buy something, and I figured to do it early."

Experts cited the "associative value" of the iconic Kennedy name for attracting a full house of bidders.

Most were more than willing to pay up to 20 times presale estimates to own items from the Kennedy and Onassis homes on Fifth Avenue and in Hyannis Port and Martha's Vineyard, Mass., Peapack, N.J., and Middleburg, Va.

IN THE WORLD

Al-Qaida suspect gives himself up

Man confesses to planning Yemen attacks

BY AHMED AL-HAJJ
The Associated Press

SANA, Yemen — A suspected member of al-Qaida has turned himself in to authorities and confessed to planning terror attacks against Western embassies in the Yemeni capital, security officials said Wednesday.

The man, identified only as a 30-year-old Yemeni extremist, has told his interrogators he belonged to a cell of the al-Qaida terror group and he planned to carry out a suicide attack on the U.N. offices in Sana last week, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The militant surrendered last week to the Yemeni intelligence department in Sana, the officials said. They did not say why he turned himself in.

After his surrender, police searched his house and confiscated weapons and explosives, the officials said.

Authorities have increased security outside the U.N. building, which the militant said his cell had noticed was not well protected. Soldiers now patrol the three-story villa around the clock.

The officials said the militant also confessed that he and five others, including Saudis, had planned to attack Western embassies, including the American and British embassies. The officials did not provide further details.

On Monday, 11 suspected members of the al-Qaida terror network went on trial on charges of planning attacks in Yemen and other countries.

The suspects on Wednesday got support from al-Qaida in Iraq, in a statement posted on an Islamic Web site that regularly carries militant statements.

It warned Yemen's leaders that they will "find no way to escape the spears of the soldiers of Yemen... There is no worse than a tyrant who fights the Muslims and leaves behind the infidels."

Syria responds to U.S. removal of ambassador

BY ZEINA KARAM
The Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria — U.S. Ambassador Margaret Scobey, who has been summoned home over the assassination of Lebanon's ex-premier, delivered a letter Wednesday to Syrian officials from U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice concerning Lebanon, the official news agency said.

After meeting with Scobey, Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa said the U.S. recalling of Scobey "is an opportunity to carry Syrian positions directly to the American administration in light of regional developments," SANA said.

The agency said Scobey expressed hope that she would resume her work in Damascus "as soon as possible." It added that Rice's letter, delivered to al-Sharaa, was related to developments in Lebanon, Iraq and the peace process. Al-Sharaa, in turn, headed her Syria's reply in a letter.

Syrian analysts close to the government called the U.S. measure to recall its ambassador unfair.

"It is an unjustified escalation at this point that aims at sending a message," said Imad Fawzi Shoueib, a Syrian political analyst who routinely expresses views shared by the Syrian government.

Washington's move Tuesday came as the U.N. Security Council called for an urgent report from the U.N. secretary-general on the "circumstances, causes and consequences" of Rafik Hariri's death in a massive explosion that ripped



Margaret Scobey

through his motorcade Monday in Beirut and killed 16 others.

In Beirut, Lebanon, on Wednesday, mourners holding banners saying "Syria Out!" crowded around the flag-draped coffin of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and his family warned the pro-Damascus government to stay away as hundreds of thousands of people turned his funeral into a spontaneous rally against Syria.

Along the funeral route through downtown Beirut, the Lebanese flag was hung from balconies and pictures were posted of Hariri, who was assassinated Monday by a massive car bomb that also killed 16 others.

Angry protesters shouted insults at Syrian President Bashar Assad to "remove your dogs from Beirut" — a reference to Syrian intelligence agents — and an overall contingent of 15,000 troops deployed here since 1976.



Greenpeace protesters sit on the steps of the International Petroleum Exchange in London on Wednesday after attempting to stop trading on the floor of the exchange. The protest marked the day the Kyoto Protocol on global warming came into force.

Kyoto global-warming pact to cut 'greenhouse gases' takes effect

BY JOSEPH COLEMAN
The Associated Press

KYOTO, Japan — The Kyoto global warming pact went into force Wednesday, seven years after it was negotiated, imposing limits on emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases scientists blame for increasing world temperatures, melting glaciers and rising oceans.

The landmark agreement, negotiated in Japan's ancient capital of Kyoto in 1997 and ratified by 140 nations, targets carbon dioxide and five other gases that can trap heat in the atmosphere, and are believed to be behind rising global temperatures that many scientists say are disrupting weather patterns.

The United States, the world's largest emitter of such gases, has refused to ratify the agreement, saying it would harm the economy and is flawed by the lack of restrictions on emissions by emerging economies China and India.

"We have been calling on the United States to join. But the country that is the world's biggest emitter has not joined yet, and that is regrettable," Japan's top government spokesman, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda, told reporters.

Environmental officials, gathered in the convention hall where the accord was adopted, hailed the protocol as a historic first step in the battle against global warming and urged the world to further strengthen safeguards against greenhouse gases.

"Today is a day of celebration and also a day to renew our resolve... to combat global warming," said Hiroshi Ohki, former Japanese environment minister and president of the conference that negotiated the protocol.

Australia, the only other developed nation besides the United States not to join, defended that decision, with Environment Minister Ian Campbell saying the country was nonetheless on track to cut emissions by 30 percent.

The Kyoto agreement was delayed by the requirement that countries accounting for 55 percent of the world's emissions must ratify it. That goal was reached last year — nearly seven years after the pact was negotiated — with Russia's approval.

Terror suspect left goodbye note

MADRID, Spain — One of the prime suspects in the Madrid train bombings left a goodbye note saying he prayed for martyrdom and encouraging his children to join Islamic militant fighters, according to previously classified documents released Tuesday.

Police said the letter was written and signed by Moroccan Abdelnabi Koumja before he committed suicide in April last year.

It was among 125 pages of police documents released Tuesday by the National Court judge leading the investigation into the March 11, 2004 bombings.

Iran says U.S. flew drones over sites

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's intelligence chief on Wednesday accused the United States of flying spy drones over its nuclear sites and threatened to shoot down the unmanned surveillance crafts.

Intelligence Minister Ali Yunesi comments backed a report in The Washington Post on Sunday that quoted unidentified U.S. officials as saying the drones have been flying over Iran for nearly a year to seek evidence of nuclear weapons programs.

Also in Iran on Wednesday, Iranian state television reported that an explosion near the southwestern town of Deylam, about 110 miles from a nuclear facility, may have been caused by a fuel tank dropping from an Iranian plane. A government spokesman said the blast may have been caused by friend-

ly fire. However, a top security official said the blast was caused during the construction of a dam.

Tsunami survivor 'Baby 81' reunion

KALMUNAI, Sri Lanka — The 4-month-old boy who was swept from his mother's arms in the Asian tsunami was handed to his parents in a joyous courtroom reunion Wednesday after an agonizing custody battle that lasted nearly eight weeks.

Smiling with relief, Jenita Jeyarajah took the boy who came to be known as "Baby 81" from a doctor's arms after the judge said DNA tests confirmed he was her son Abhass.

The infant was found on a beach among bodies and debris on Dec. 26. He was claimed by nine couples, symbolizing the anguish of thousands of families who lost children in the disaster, but only Jeyarajah pressed the claim in court.

China's miners in dangerous position

FUXIN, China — Chinese miners die at a rate of about 16 per day, lost to floods, fires and explosions.

This week, the industry suffered its worst accident in decades with more than 200 dead in a single blast in northeastern Liaoning province in a methane gas explosion. Last year, 6,027 workers were killed in China's coal mines.

For many of China's mine workers, the work may be dangerous, but the pay far exceeds what they could make elsewhere.

From The Associated Press

North Korea nukes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea told U.S. officials it has no plans to launch "large-scale" economic cooperation with North Korea before the dispute over the communist state's nuclear weapons programs is resolved, the foreign minister said Wednesday.

The comments came amid growing calls from opposition lawmakers that President Roh Moo-hyun's government needs to reconsider its policy of engagement with North Korea, which declared last week that it possessed nuclear weapons and would boycott disarmament talks.

Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon on Wednesday repeated South Ko-

rea's commitment to providing aid to poverty-stricken North Korea out of "humanitarian concern" despite the North's latest moves.

However, Ban said he told U.S. officials that South Korea doesn't "have any plans to launch large-scale inter-Korean economic cooperation" as the nuclear issue has yet to be resolved.

Drug amnesty fails

BELFAST, Northern Ireland — Not a single inmate in Northern Ireland's main prison handed in drugs during a one-day amnesty designed to reduce abuse in the facility, the British government said Wednesday.

Authorities at Maghaberry Prison, west of Belfast, took the extraordinary measure after 27-year-old inmate Kevin Slevin was found dead in his cell Monday. Slevin, who was serving a sentence for possessing and supplying illegal drugs, died from a suspected overdose of the sedative diazepam, more commonly known as Valium.

Balloon launch plans

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — U.S. space agency NASA plans to launch several massive helium balloons from northern Sweden launch pad this summer, officials said Wednesday.

The balloon campaign will begin either in May or June when

a large — and heavy — telescope will be launched, along with a test flight of a newly developed long-last balloon vehicle.

The campaign is part of the space agency's way of using the balloons to lift heavy payloads — astronomical telescopes and other heavy equipment for astrophysical experiments and research into cosmic radiation — to an altitude of about 25 miles.

WWII bomb disposal

LE HAVRE, France — Disposal experts were called in to remove an American World War II bomb in the northern French city of Le Havre on Wednesday.

A security perimeter was laid out in the port to allow the remov-

al of the 1,100-pound bomb that was discovered two weeks ago.

Filled with 319 pounds of explosives, the bomb lay undiscovered for more than half a century.

Tracking Hurricane Olaf

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa — Residents boarded up homes, businesses and church buildings, and stocked up on canned food, bottled water and flashlights in anticipation of Hurricane Olaf.

The storm was expected to pass near the territory's main island of Tutuila early Wednesday, Gov. Togiola Tulafono declared a state of emergency Tuesday.

Olaf had wind gusts up to 190 mph, and giant waves were likely to cause flooding in low-lying areas, the National Weather Service said.

Authorities began evacuating residents from coastal and low-lying areas of Pago Pago.

American Samoa is located in the South Pacific, and is the United States' southernmost territory.

Afghan drug-fighting aid

KABUL, Afghanistan — British Foreign Minister Jack Straw announced a doubling of aid to combat Afghanistan's booming heroin trade during a visit Wednesday, while Afghanistan's president announced a renewed effort to end trafficking from his nation's war-wrecked lands.

Straw said that British aid per year would rise to \$100 million starting in April, from \$50 million now. Half of that money will go toward helping opium poppy farmers find alternative crops.

Straw said London also planned to set up a trust fund into which other nations could pledge contributions to help Afghanistan fight heroin production.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai has made ending drug-trafficking a cornerstone of his new administration, vowing to fight a "holy war" against the practice. But limited government control in large swaths of the country has contributed to a revival in production since the fall of the hardline Taliban in late 2001.

9/11 suspect's retrial

HAMBURG, Germany — Prosecutors and defense attorneys in the retrial of the only Sept. 11 suspect ever convicted urged German authorities Wednesday to press the United States for further evidence in the case.

Germany's top law enforcement official, Interior Ministry Otto Schily, was quoted as saying after a visit to Washington this month that he expects the United States to hand over additional information soon. An FBI agent also told the Hamburg court last month that U.S. authorities have more information on Moumri el Motassadeq.

El Motassadeq, 30, is being retried on more than 3,000 counts of accessory to murder and membership in a terrorist organization on suspicion he provided logistical support for suicide hijackers Mohamed Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi and Ziad Jarrah.

He was convicted in 2003 on the same charges and sentenced to the maximum 15 years, but an appeals court threw out the conviction in March and ordered a retrial. It ruled that had been unfairly denied testimony by key al-Qaida suspects in U.S. custody.

From The Associated Press

THE FACE OF WAR HAS CHANGED.



Photo courtesy Soldier Magazine

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OPINION

Shanley verdict gives other victims courage

BY DAVID CLOHESY

Thirty minutes after a Massachusetts jury found ex-priest Paul Shanley guilty of molesting a boy, I got a call from a man who was also abused by a priest. "I've never told anyone except my wife," he said. "That verdict gave me the strength to finally tell someone else."

To me, that proved that the Shanley verdict was indeed a victory for us all. Anything that makes it even slightly less difficult for wounded abuse survivors to come forward is progress.

Because of archaic and rigid statutes of limitations, very few abusive clergy ever see the inside of a courtroom. Because of timid prosecutors and excessive deference, virtually no complicit church officials have.

So the mere fact that Shanley faced criminal charges at all was, in itself, at least a partial victory for the tens of thousands of clergy molestation victims, many of whom continue to suffer in shame, silence and self-blame even now.

The fact that a jury unanimously declared Shanley guilty is even more significant. Not too many years ago, it was unthinkable that average citizens could convict a cleric of such horrific crimes.

Most clergy molestation victims disclose their private horror to no one but a spouse, sibling or dear friend.

Most never pursue criminal or civil charges. Most just try to muddle along, cope with their pain, and try to forget

(often using addictions such as booze, drugs, sex or work). And those who do speak up most often simply want some acknowledgment that yes, a terrible crime (usually avoidable, had church authorities acted sooner) was committed against them.

It's rare to get that kind of admission from a bishop, or even a simple "I'm sorry for what you endured and for how you're still suffering." So some of us take legal action. For many, that can ultimately be very healing.

This is not to minimize the public safety benefit of putting Shanley behind bars or on probation. Despite his age, he must be considered a threat. The mere passage of time doesn't magically cure a compulsive predator. But to the wounded and often fragile psyches of people like me, once trusting but severely violated Catholics, the Shanley verdict is a ray of hope.

It reminds us that when victims stay silent, nothing changes, but when victims come forward, sometimes justice is possible and more pain is prevented.

It reminds us that when it's time to report our victimization, it's better to go to our flawed but time-tested, open, impartial American justice system, rather than a new, untested, secretive and biased internal church process.

On the down side, Shanley's depravity has deflected attention away from even greater depravity: the inexcusable inaction by church officials who knew about or suspected sex crimes but did nothing to pro-



Defrocked priest Paul Shanley listens to his sentence in Middlesex Superior Court in Cambridge, Mass., after being convicted of raping and fondling a boy at his Roman Catholic church during the 1980s. David Clohessy, national director of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, says that not too many years ago it was unthinkable that average citizens could convict a cleric of such horrific crimes.

tect innocent kids and vulnerable adults. That's where our attention should be focused.

Shanley will never be a priest again. But four or five of the clerics who shielded him and rebuffed his victims still are. In fact, they're now bishops. There will be no real "victory" for men and women who have

been raped by priests and ignored by bishops until these men — top church officials — are no longer in positions where they can put vulnerable parishioners at risk.

David Clohessy of St. Louis is national director of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests. He and his brothers say they were molested by a mid-Missouri priest in the 1960s and '70s. He wrote this for the Duluth (Minn.) News Tribune.

Little comfort in conviction that wasn't warranted

BY ROBIN WASHINGTON

Duluth (Minn.) News Tribune

When Paul Shanley was escorted out of the Cambridge, Mass., courtroom Tuesday after his sentencing for the sexual rapes of a Sunday school student in the 1980s, he was being marched toward his death. Not that there's capital punishment in Massachusetts, but the 12-to-15-year prison term the 74-year-old defrocked priest got is de facto equal to life.

If he's lucky, I have zero faith in the corrections system that allowed the prison murder of fellow molester ex-priest John Geoghan keeping the even more notorious Shanley alive.

And who's miss him? After last week's verdict, untold others prevented by statute of limitations from ever telling a courtroom their tales of abuse at the hands of the charismatic priest shed tears of relief. For three years I have been indelibly touched by their horrific stories and can only grasp at a hint of their pain. But if Shanley's conviction is viewed by them as a victory, it's a hollow one.

Our legal system hinges on reasonable doubt, and it abounds in this case. Rather than in the courtroom, Shanley's real trial was held in a hotel ballroom three years earlier, where a lawyer playing judge, jury and executioner vowed a throng of journalists and live TV audience with a PowerPoint presentation of voluminous church files to deem the priest as the devil incarnate.

He was a founder of the North American Man-Boy Love Association, the lawyer suggested — except the papers actually showed no evidence of that. His appetite for little boys was so uncontrollable his "pathology" (was) beyond repair," the

I have zero faith in the corrections system that allowed the prison murder of fellow molester ex-priest John Geoghan keeping the even more notorious [Paul] Shanley alive.

lawyer quoted a pre-eminent psychiatrist — except the doctor never met Shanley and was talking about his laziness, not abuse.

He was the subject of countless complaints by parishioners for statements about adults having sex with children — except they were complaining more vociferously about his preaching tolerance for gays.

Don't think that dog-and-pony show had any impact on the jury three years later type "NABLAB" and "Shanley" in Google and see what you get.

Shanley indeed did horrible acts, and his mantra "I never had sex with a child,

I never forced anyone into sex" — is rendered ridiculous with his vague definition of "child" excluding those between puberty and the age of consent.

Those deeds remained unpunished when his criminal accuser — who'd already received \$500,000 in a civil case handled by the ringmaster attorney — managed to tearfully navigate a sea of reasonable doubt.

That includes whether the accuser spoke with his lawyer before recovering his memory of abuse, how an agreement with the law firm in Boston could be signed and dated the same day the accuser's memory returned in Colorado, and

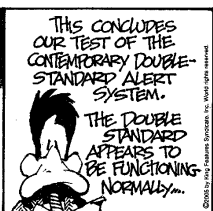
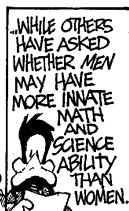
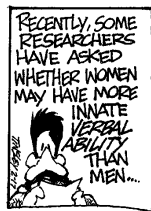
why the accuser's best pal with whom his memories were intertwined — and whose sworn statement had morphed from "I repressed the abuse" to "I always remembered it but was afraid" back to "I repressed it" — dropped out of the criminal case after receiving more than \$1.4 million in a civil settlement. Yes, victims frequently forget details of long-age trauma, but we're talking about depositions taken by a blue-chip lawyer three years ago, not 20.

Maybe Shanley did it. And whether he did or not, his life or death being harsh for crimes for which there is a degree of doubt engenders about as much sympathy as Al Capone's trip upriver for tax evasion. But for all the pain and lies and betrayal victims have endured, those seeking healing will find little solace in a questionable verdict and another dead ex-priest.

Robin Washington is editorial-page editor of the News Tribune and writes the Shanley case for two years for the Boston Herald.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



A 'wrong' number

MI DETROIT — The Motor City produces the most calls to the Rejection Hotline, a free telephone service that allows uninterested objects of affection to blow off come-ons.

It works like this: You're asked for your telephone number by someone in whom you have no interest.

You might sound receptive by saying, "248-262-6861."

When that number is dialed, this is what the caller gets: "The person who gave you this number did not want you to have their real number. Maybe the idea of going out with you just seems as appealing as playing leapfrog with unicorns. ... Do your best to forget about the person who gave you this number because, trust us, they've already forgotten about you."

Cher Wardlow, who was given the number about a year ago, wasn't amused. "It was mean," said the 30-year-old store manager. "I was kind of insulted. I didn't think I was all bad. I thought he had a lot of nerve."

New ferry operator

NJ NEWARK — Ferry service between New Jersey and lower Manhattan will continue uninterrupted under a new operator. Under an agreement the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is expected to approve next week, BillyBey Ferry Co. will assume routes operated by New York Waterway from Hoboken and Jersey City.

Protecting newborns

AR LITTLE ROCK — Legislation inspired by a grandmother's quest to make something positive out of the drug-induced death of her infant grandson won a Senate committee's endorsement. The bill would expand the definition of neglect to include causing a child to be born with an illegal substance in his or her system or with a health problem as a result of the mother's use of an illegal substance.

Gay-marriage ban drive

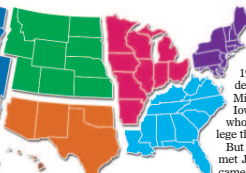
FL ORLANDO — A petition drive aimed at writing a ban on gay marriage into the state constitution is under way. If the amendment is to go before the voters, FloridaMarriage.org must collect 611,000 valid signatures by next February. The group has ties to conservative Christian organizations.

Humphrey memorial

MN ST. PAUL — Plans for a memorial honoring Hubert H. Humphrey are gaining momentum. The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board is using a call for designers of the life-size statue of the late senator and vice president. A design could be selected by April and construction could begin next year.

Bible classes allowed

VA STAUNTON — The Staunton School Board has decided to allow Bible classes to continue to this year for elementary school students, despite staunch objec-



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

tions from a board member who also is a pastor.

"I think WRE is wrong for our school children," said the Rev. Edward Scott, who serves on the board. "It belongs in the homes and in the churches."

The board voted 5-1 to conduct a yearlong review of the program to determine if the needs of both the students going to the classes and those who opt out are being met.

Some parents asked the school board to eliminate or modify the program, saying the children who opt out are stigmatized and have little to do while waiting for the other children to return to class.

The Bible classes began in Virginia in 1929 after a majority of students failed a simple Bible test.

Traveling first class

AK ANCHORAGE — The Alaska Railroad is acquiring two new, custom-designed railcars this May for passengers who want to upgrade to first class. The service will be available between Anchorage and Fairbanks on the Denali Star Train.

Required wartime love

MO HANNIBAL — It was a two-day encounter at the height of World War II, but Richard Turner never forgot that Iowa girl. Now, 60 years later, he's about to marry her.

Years passed before he decided to try to find Annette Jensen, but



Who you looking at?

A great gray owl perches on a tree near Aitkin, Minn. Large numbers of owls have been reported in central Minnesota this winter, moving south from their traditional range in search of food.

after renewing their courtship the pair plan to wed in Florida.

The two first met in 1945. Turner was a student at the University of Missouri who traveled to Iowa to visit a girlfriend who had transferred to college there.

But upon his arrival, Turner met Jensen. They quickly became so close she invited him home to meet her parents. He reported for military duty a short time later. Jensen said Turner "wrote a beautiful poem I kept all these years." Beyond that, the two lost contact.

In 1999, Turner ventured to Decatur, Iowa, while heading to visit a son on the West Coast. He stopped at the high school and asked for help in finding Jensen.

Turner eventually got a surprise call on July 13, 2005.

"My phone rang, and this voice said, 'This is Ann Jensen,'" Turner recalled. "I said, 'Who?' She said 'Annette.'"

Alternate route

WI MADISON — State regulators ordered American Transmission Co. to provide alternative routes for a planned power line in northern Wisconsin after the Douglas County board barred access to some land for the \$420 million project. The company said it would go to court over the issue.

Ants with a sting

HI HILO — It doesn't make as much noise as the coqui frog, but the little fire ant has invaded the Big Island, stinging fruit pickers and homeowners alike. The little fire ant, a native of South America, has been spreading since it was first discovered in Hawaiian Paradise Park in 1999, state agriculture officials said.

The tiny light-brown ant is no bigger in length than the edge of a penny, but it can pack a painful punch — fire ant stings cause immediate dime-sized red welts on the skin that last at least several days followed by intense itching.

Colleen Schrandt, who grows rambutan, mangosteen and durian on her 15 acres of orchards at Paipai, said she has trouble keeping workers because of the ants.

One fed screaming, "I can't take it any more," she said.

Pioneering gorilla dies

IL CHICAGO — The first gorilla ever born at Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo has died at age 35, elderly for a western lowland gorilla.

The female Kumba apparently suffered from kidney failure, zoo spokeswoman Kelly McGrath said. Keepers decided to euthanize her on Saturday.

Kumba's birth in 1970 marked a turning point in how gorillas were handled in U.S. zoos, McGrath said. Previously, they were typically kept apart from other gorillas. Kumba was kept with her mother and later with other gorillas.

"Kumba marked the beginning of a realization that gorillas in zoos living as they do in the wild — in social groups — was better for them and better from an education standpoint [for the public]," McGrath said.



Prairie wagon

Malay Ingram, 8, pushes her 6-year-old sister, Molly, down a hill in Wichita, Kan. The Ingram family was taking advantage of the unseasonably warm weather.



Crash landing

Firefighters clear debris off a police officer's cruiser that crashed into a building near Union Station in Washington, D.C. Authorities said the officer behind the wheel possibly fainted.



'Oh, won't you be mine?'

Ruthann Sharpe, first vice president of the Bank of Blue Valley, receives a musical Valentine's Day message in Leawood, Kan. Trails West Barbershop Chorus members — clockwise from left, Mike Rowland, Russ Craig, Gary Colburn, Earl Martin and Ernie Hicks — played musical cupid at 28 locations. Sharpe's husband sent her the singing Valentine's Day wish.



A Kiss will make it better

Workers Charles Downing, left, and David Hooks, center, join homeowner Dana Morris on the roof of his house in Gulf Breeze, Fla., while installing an old billboard advertising a Kiss concert. Lamar Advertising Co. is donating the billboard coverings as temporary patches to the damage caused by Hurricane Ivan because the blue plastic tarps from FEMA are wearing out.



For the actors, anything goes

Sarah Gruver shuts her eyes tightly as Becca Greene-Cramer sprays her hair at Brattleboro Union High School in Brattleboro, Vt. The pair were preparing for the school music department's rehearsal of the play "Anything Goes."



Sleigh ride

Butch Durgin musters his team of Belgian horses during the Windsor Historical Society's annual sleigh ride at the Windsor Fairgrounds in Maine.

Brain-dead inmate freed

CA SACRAMENTO — An inmate who was left brain-dead after being shot by a prison guard last month was freed from custody with an unusual decision from a state prison board.

Daniel Provenzo, 28, remains in Bakersfield's Mercy Hospital, hooked to a ventilator and intravenous tubes. But he no longer is shackled to the bed, nor guarded around the clock at a cost of \$1,656 a day, as he had been since he was shot in the head with a supposedly non-lethal foam projectile during a prison altercation Jan. 16.

Provenzo was released in June after serving a three-year, eight-month Ventura County sentence for drug possession with intent to sell. But he was reincarcerated Aug. 23 for violating his parole by driving under the influence. He was due for parole consideration again in June.

Hemingway controversy

ID BOISE — Residents who live near writer Ernest Hemingway's former home in the region of Ketchum want to settle a dispute with its owner, The Nature Conservancy.

Four couples say plans to turn the house into a literary memorial would create tourist traffic, disrupting the neighborhood where building lots can sell for more than \$4 million each.

They want to purchase 13 acres that include the house, then return the building to the conservation group — provided it be moved to somewhere else in Ketchum. The Conservancy's board of directors will consider the offer later this month.

New rules for jail visits

MA WEST BOYLSTON — There's a long list of things that you can't do when you're behind bars, but for inmates at the Worcester County Jail and House of Correction, the list is getting a little longer.

Sheriff Guy W. Glodis has ordered an end to the face-to-face sessions in most sections of the jail, saying that contact between prisoners and visitors are to be blame for most of the drugs and weapons entering the county lockups.

That means an end to the brief hug that prisoners are allowed to receive at the end of a visit, as well as any other direct contact with visitors. Kissing has been banned for several years.

"There has to be some kind of disincentive to go to jail," Glodis told the Telegram & Gazette of Worcester. "This shouldn't be a place to be coddled, hugged or given contact. This is a penal facility in which you lose many rights. That's why it's a jail."

Hoffa lead a dead end

MI DETROIT — Blood found on the floor of a Detroit home is not that of Jimmy Hoffa, investigators said, ruling out what had looked like one of the most promising recent leads in the disappearance of the Teamsters boss 30 years ago.

Authorities had ripped up floorboards last May at a house where Delaware Teamsters official Frank Sheeran said he shot Hoffa to death.

Police in the Detroit suburb of

Bloomfield Township received a report from the FBI crime lab Monday concluding that human blood from a male was on the floorboards but that the blood was not Hoffa's.

Oakland County Prosecutor David Gorcey said it was that was not known whose blood it was, but that the DNA would be entered into a national database.

"It really would be nice to put some closure on this case," Gorcey said.

Hoffa was last seen on July 30, 1975, at a restaurant in Bloomfield Township. Sheeran died in 2003.

Businesses destroyed

VT WHITE RIVER JUNCTION — A fire destroyed several businesses in a downtown building, but there were no immediate reports of injuries.

More than 50 firefighters fought the flames for at least two hours, bringing them under control just after 8 p.m., said the retired Hartford fire chief, John Wood, who acted as a safety officer for responding emergency crews.

"When I came down here, there were flames coming from the roof," said resident John Ashley. "They were adding water to it pretty quick."

The blaze broke out in a bar and destroyed adjoining businesses.

A Texas-sized gift

TX HOUSTON — An oil heir's gift to a Houston museum could eventually add up to \$450 million.

Carlone Wiess Law, the daughter of one of Humble Oil & Co.'s founders, made the Museum of Fine Art, Houston, the prime beneficiary of her estate after her death in 2003.

When all of Law's assets are sold and the legal proceedings conclude, possibly by the end of this year, the museum could net between \$400 million and \$450 million, said director Peter Marzio.

"In recent history, this would be one of the biggest — if not the biggest — cash gifts to an art museum," said Mimi Gaudieri, executive director, Association of Art Museum Directors in New York.

"This money will help make Houston one of the most important museums in terms of programming and serving the public."

Law's giving would rank as No. 1 in non-art donations to museums in a list compiled by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, which tracks charitable donations of \$50 million and more.

Nothing to crow about

NY AUBURN — Hunters killed more than 1,000 crows in an annual contest that has drawn national attention to this upstate New York community.

Thirty-four teams participated in the third annual crow shoot, killing 1,061 birds over two days, said organizer Tom Lennox.

The winning team shot 186 crows.

Meanwhile, protesters demonstrated outside City Hall this week to decry the hunt, some carrying placards that said "Stop the Carnage!"

The city, 20 miles west of Syracuse in the Finger Lakes region, has been plagued for nearly two decades by a roost of crows that has grown to nearly 60,000 birds.

Photos and stories from wire reports

FACES

Romance is the new action

Will Smith found box office stardom in big-budget thrillers; now he's rediscovering comedy in 'Hitch'

BY ANNETTE JOHN-HALL
Knight Ridder Newspapers

He's fought off aliens, drug lords, the CIA and — a! — robots. Heck, he even brought George Foreman to his knees.

Now, in "Hitch," his first romantic comedy since he burst onto the small screen as the Fresh Prince, Will Smith finds himself in the battle of the sexes.

Smith, the quintessential ladies' man, plays "date doctor" Alex Hitchens, creating situations to help ordinary guys snag the girls of their dreams.

"No matter what, no matter when, no matter who, any man has a chance to sweep any woman off her feet," Hitch observes. "He just needs the right broom."

A smooth operator, funny and debonair, Smith demonstrates in "Hitch," which debuted at No. 1 last week, that he's just as proficient at wooing the sultry Sara (Eva Mendes) as he is at beating back three-headed monsters. Which doesn't exactly come as a revelation. Even during his days as the fun-loving, slightly goofy Fresh Prince, Smith had "leading man" written all over him. But it has taken Smith, 36, more than a decade to make his way back to romance. "I'm much more at home in the romantic comedy genre," he says by telephone from Honolulu, where he was promoting the film.

Smith played the lovable, wayward nephew from West Philly who brought a grounded sensibility to his haughty relatives on "The Fresh Prince of Bel Air" for six years on TV. After the show went off the air, Smith ruled the box office with blockbusters and their follow-ups, such as "Bad Boys," "Men in Black," "Independence Day," "Enemy of the State" and "I, Robot." The films made him a superstar, but apart from his Oscar-nominated turn in 2001's "Ali" (in which he decked Charles Sheffield, playing Foreman), he was in danger of being typecast.

And it was by his own design. "Those kinds of movies were the ones that made me want to make movies in the first place," Smith says.

"When I was growing up, 'Star Wars' was the first film I appreciated. Then came 'Die Hard,' 'Lethal Weapon,' '48 Hours.' Now, my tastes have changed. ... Today, the film I can't stop watching is 'Casablanca.'"

Part of the reason is professional practicality: "I'm 36. I can't make those [action] films much past 40." The other reason has to do with growing up.

"I have to relinquish childhood tastes," he says. "The Cary Grant comedies, movies like 'Forrest Gump' or 'Philadelphia' — those are more to my adult tastes."

Smith says he was intrigued by the idea of a "date doctor," someone whose job it is to fix it and let love flow, "because relationship counseling has been his role in real life."

"I AM Hitch with all my friends and family," he says. Smith wasn't a ladies' man back in high school, but says he was the confidant that girls — and guys, for that matter — approached to solve their problems of love.

"I study ladies," he says. "Most of my friends don't want to spend their weekends reading 'The Secret Life of Bees,' but I like to see what women are thinking." So when producer James Lassiter, Smith's childhood pal who runs Overbrook Entertainment, began to develop the idea for "Hitch," Smith pushed for a script. He brought in Andy Tennant, "Sweet Home Alabama" to direct and make his alpha-male vision clear.

"Will wanted to make a comedy with romance and not a romantic comedy," says Tennant, by phone from Los Angeles. "A romantic comedy is usually with a woman protagonist, who is more accessible to emotions. You put a guy in a movie about romance, you've got to make them laugh before they feel anything. We embarked on a path to make it funny."

Married seven years, Smith and wife Jada Pinkett Smith have one of Hollywood's model marriages. The couple are parents of Jaden, 6, Willow, 4, and Trey, 12, Smith's son from his first marriage. Instead of indulging in real-life dramas over their merged family, the Smiths created and produced a comedy series for UPN, "All of Us," loosely based on their experience.

"Jada and I don't just love our relationship, we study it," Smith says, adding that the key is "blatant honesty. ... Jada knows who I am and I know who I am."

Which is a good thing, considering his sizzling on-screen chemistry with the beautiful Mendes ("Training Day," "Out of Time").

"It's simple. Eva Mendes is fine, a beautiful young actress. Am I going to try to sleep with her or not? No. If I answer the question truthfully, we can move along. The complexity only comes in with a lie."

Spoken as only a true love doctor can.



ABACA PRESS/KRT

Will Smith, with wife Jada Pinkett Smith, daughter Willow Camille Reign and son Jaden Christopher Syre, arrive at the "Shark Tale" premiere in 2004 in New York City. The animated "Shark Tale" was recently released on DVD, about the same time Smith's new movie, "Hitch," premiered in the States.

Mellencamp announces U.S. tour

John Mellencamp will bring his "Words & Music" to cities across the United States this spring on his first headlining tour in three years.

Sixteen stops have been announced for the first leg of the tour, which opens in Savannah, Ga., on March 23 and ends April 17 in Louisville, Ky. The tour is dubbed the "Words & Music Tour" after Mellencamp's recently released double CD greatest hits collection.

"Jack and Diane," "R.O.C.K. in the U.S.A." and "Small Town" are among the songs Mellencamp will perform.

"Going out and playing is a great way for me to keep these songs alive; it's what I've done for my whole professional life," the 53-year-old rocker said Monday in Bloomington, Ind.

Folk star Donovan, known for hits such as "Sunshine Superman" and "Hurdy Gurdy Man," will be a special guest.



Mellencamp

21st century's Janis Joplin sought

If Joss Stone isn't busy, here's something she could probably win.

Janis Joplin's estate has announced "Search for the Pearl," a reality TV talent search to find the next Joplin. The 17-year-old Stone sang "Cry Baby," then teamed with Melissa Etheridge's vocals and driving guitar on "Piece of My Heart" in a gritty tribute to Joplin during Sunday's Grammy Awards show.

According to a statement, vocalists across the country will audition to re-create the vocal stylings of Joplin, who died in 1970 at age 27. Five finalists will be flown to San Francisco to perform for a panel of judges. The selected will then headline a world concert tour, performing with bands that played with Joplin, including Big Brother & The Holding Company, the Kozmic Blues Band and Full Tilt Boogie Band. The tour will culminate in a star-studded tribute concert in 2006.

No word on what network might air the show.

Locke in love, plans marriage

"American Idol" runner-up Kimberley Locke is a winner when it comes to love.

Locke, who competed in season two of the TV talent contest, said she is engaged to marry her high school sweetheart, Don Campbell.

Locke had a hit single, "8th World Wonder," and is working on a new album, expected by the end of the year.

Mattel puts Lohan in plastic

Lindsay Lohan, the red-haired "Mean Girls" star, is getting the Barbie treatment with a new doll made in her likeness.

The doll is dressed in full red-carpet splendor, wearing a beige dress and a faux fur-trimmed coat.

The Mattel doll comes complete with a director's chair and her very own velvet rope, the company announced recently. Part of the toy maker's "My Movie" line, the Lohan doll is due out in June and will retail for about \$30.

Lohan, 18, also starred in "Freaky Friday" and recently finished shooting "Herbie: Fully Loaded," an update of the Disney story about a plucky Volkswagen Beetle.



Lohan doll

Stories and photos from wire services

YOUR MONEY

Is savings rate really as bad as it seems?

BY PAMELA GAYNOR
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Regis Briski goes to the supermarket armed with coupons. When he needs clothes, he shops sales. He buys his car used, minimizes other spending and tries not to have any debt.

His frugality has a flip side: It has helped the 54-year-old Glenshaw, Pa., resident, who works in accounting, sock away roughly 10 percent of his paycheck in retirement funds since the early 1980s.

Two decades ago, Briski's thrift was the norm. The most widely watched government barometer — the personal savings rate — suggests it no longer is. The rate has steadily dropped from 10.8 percent in 1984 to just a shade above 1 percent last year.

Concern about how much Americans save and whether their savings will be enough for retirement underpins the debate on the Social Security changes President Bush promoted in his State of the Union speech.

Some argue that Americans would save more if Social Security did not entitle them to a guaranteed income in retirement. Others believe Congress should leave Social Security alone and create a compulsory savings program alongside it.

Amid it all, there is a debate over whether the dramatic drop in the personal savings rate reflects a free-spending culture in which U.S. consumers buy big-screen televisions and new sport utility vehicles at the expense of their futures, or whether Americans actually are building nest eggs in ways the government does not accurately measure.

To Susan Sterne, senior research and chief economist of Economic Analysis Associates in Greenwich, Conn., the personal savings rate is "irrelevant." Sterne says the government's bellwether savings measure is flawed because it tracks what is left of



Christide Woods places addressed Social Security checks into storage bins in a vault Friday at the U.S. Treasury's Financial Management services facility in Philadelphia. Amid the debate about Social Security reform, is concern about how much Americans save and whether it will be enough for retirement.

Americans' disposable income each month rather than calculating what people put in bank accounts, brokerages and other places.

Sterne, who keeps an eye on money that flows every month into mutual funds and other investments, says, "It's coming from somewhere."

Instead of measuring that activity, the U.S. Commerce Department computes the personal savings rate — which is intended

only to track current savings, not previously invested assets — by tallying monthly after-tax income from a variety of sources — mainly wages, dividends, interest, rents and employer contributions to pensions — and then subtracting expenditures.

The tally tends to understate income and overstate expenses, according to economists agree. Perhaps the biggest shortcoming is that it does not count capital gains from the sale of stocks or homes as part of disposable income, but it does count capital gains

taxes as expenditures. In addition, it counts major outlays, such as the purchase of a car, in a lump sum rather than dividing it into payments, as most people do.

Joseph G. Carson, senior vice president and economist for Alliance Bernstein, a New York-based investment research and management firm, said the steady march of consumer spending does not mean Americans are not saving.

U.S. Treasury Department data shows that Americans have harvested \$3.5 trillion in capital gains since 1997 — more than the combined gains of the preceding 20 years, he said, and total household net worth has doubled, to roughly \$48 trillion last year, from \$24.2 trillion a decade ago.

Using separate statistics from Federal Reserve data and the median family's net worth likely will top \$100,000 when the latest Federal Reserve survey is released, up 52 percent in constant dollars, from 1995, when it was \$66,000.

As for regular savings, Carson also has tracked monthly net acquisitions of all financial assets (excluding life insurance and pension reserves) from Federal Reserve data and found that they came to an average of 5 percent of disposable income last year and have not varied much during the past 15 years.

"Wealth creation and capital gain income is an increasingly important part of decisions to spend," Carson said. "I keep asking, how much wealth do you need before you can spend more?"

But some other economists say the plunging personal savings rate suggests that many Americans are not saving enough and some are not saving at all.

Zandi called the personal savings rate "a very good measure of how much we save, or more to the point, how much we don't save," and he suggested that one reason the savings rate has fallen sharply is the surge in borrowing, particularly mortgage borrowing.

TUESDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

INDEXES

52-week	Low	High	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD	52-week
High	Low	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD	52-week	High
18,830.81	17,616.40	Dow Jones Industrials	10,791.17	+2.86	+0.26	+12.1	18,830.81
3,823.96	2,743.46	Dow Jones Transportation	3,589.31	-21.72	-0.66	-5.59	+3.67
354.45	259.88	Dow Jones Utilities	325.79	+2.91	+0.90	+2.91	+2.91
6,211.13	5,752.02	NYSE Composite	7,296.37	+18.73	+0.26	+8.89	+18.73
1,486.37	1,158.74	Amex Index	1,502.11	+1.91	+0.13	+4.72	+20.44
2,751.62	2,552.82	Nasdaq Composite	2,882.91	+25.29	+0.88	+4.23	+14.53
1,217.90	1,060.72	S&P 500	1,206.14	+0.84	+0.07	+4.48	+27.27
548.29	548.29	S&P MidCap	602.77	+1.12	+0.18	+0.84	+1.12
656.11	515.99	Russell 2000	633.02	+2.06	+0.34	+2.54	+8.52
12,836.38	10,268.52	EU Wholesale 5000	11,886.22	+18.74	+0.19	-7.1	+6.37

NYSE

Most Active (\$1 or more)				Most Active (\$1 or more)				Most Active (\$1 or more)			
Name	Vol	%0	Last	Name	Vol	%0	Last	Name	Vol	%0	Last
Lucent	376,708	3.41	+65	SPR	29,630	120.6	-09	Intel	587,805	28.1	+14
Quest	27,946	21.12	-19	Smith	21,421	13.32	-01	Microsoft	534,616	26.1	+84
British	2,807	2.11	-07	Chubb	11,980	37.10	+18	Alcoa	42,800	10.7	+0
Pfizer	288,899	26.69	+31	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	NewsInt'l	30,236	37.87	+17
Boeing	2,852	26.77	-33	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
QVC	307,975	1.58	+15	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
Eastman	16,699	36.19	-12	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
EMC	105,649	11.34	-09	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
Eastman	16,699	36.19	-12	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
Procter	117,901	52.79	+51	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
Procter	117,901	52.79	+51	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
Amintech	14,843	71.49	-83	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
Procter	117,901	52.79	+51	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
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Procter	117,901	52.79	+51	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08	Alcoa Inc.	42,079	4.95	+55
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Amintech	14,843	71.49	-83	Shutterstock	10,768	10.76	+08				

KEY DEFENSE STOCKS

Name	Vol	PE	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD	52-week
Name	Vol	PE	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD	52-week
Alcoa	18,830.81	17.61	69.49	-3.26	-4.71	-4.71	-4.71
Advanced Micro	3,823.96	2,743.46	38.21	-2.43	-6.27	-6.27	-6.27
Boeing	354.45	259.88	26.77	-0.33	-1.23	-1.23	-1.23
Computer Sciences	6,211.13	5,752.02	37.47	-1.44	-3.84	-3.84	-3.84
Eastman	1,486.37	1,158.74	36.19	-1.12	-3.07	-3.07	-3.07
Eastman	2,751.62	2,552.82	36.19	-1.12	-3.07	-3.07	-3.07
Eastman	1,217.90	1,060.72	36.19	-1.12	-3.07	-3.07	-3.07
Eastman	548.29	548.29	36.19	-1.12	-3.07	-3.07	-3.07
Eastman	656.11	515.99	36.19	-1.12	-3.07	-3.07	-3.07
Eastman	12,836.38	10,268.52	36.19	-1.12	-3.07	-3.07	-3.07

KEY MUTUAL FUNDS

Name	Vol	NAV	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD	52-week
Name	Vol	NAV	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD	52-week
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28
Fidelity Invest: Growth	37,608	17.88	17.88	+0.05	+0.28	+0.28	+0.28

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates		Commercial rates	
Currency	Rate	Currency	Rate
Dollar buys	\$1.3395	Philippine (Peso)	60.66
British pound	£0.7471	Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	2.58
Japanese yen (Feb. 17)	103.00	Singapore (Dollar)	1.0774
South Korean won (Feb. 16)	1,001.00	Switzerland (Franc)	1.5740
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769	Thailand (Baht)	38.31
British pound	£1.6640	Turkey (New Lira)	13.20
Canada (Dollar)	1.2111		
Denmark (Krone)	6.46		
Euro (Euro)	0.7186		
Euro (Euro)	\$1,301.70/100		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.81		
Hungary (Forint)	137.30		
Iceland (Krona)	62.175		
Israel (Shekel)	4.8375		
Japan (Yen)	104.42		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.20005		
Norway (Krone)	4.656		
Philippine (Peso)	60.66		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	2.58		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.0774		
Switzerland (Franc)	1.5740		
Thailand (Baht)	38.31		
Turkey (New Lira)	13.20		

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance of the currency. Commercial rates are interbank rates. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to the dollar, except for the British pound, which is expressed in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

PRECIOUS METALS

Gold	London close	443.75
Silver	37.25	37.25

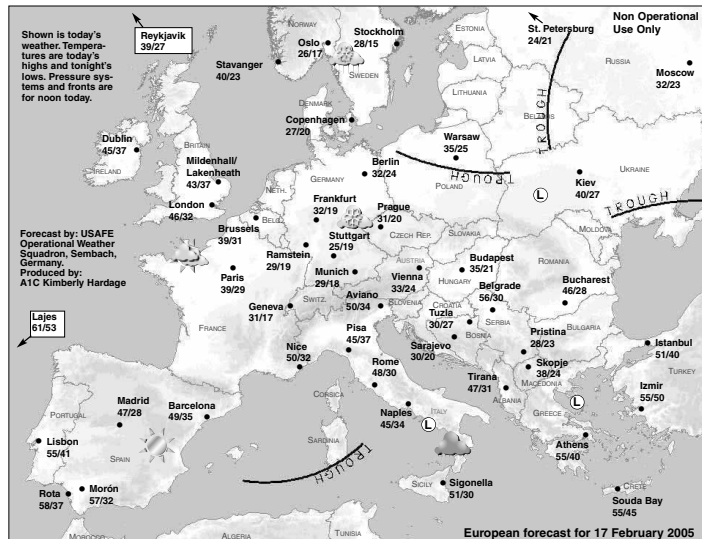
INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.50
Discount rate	3.50
3-month bill	2.50
30-year bond	4.45
Sources:	The Associated Press, Bank of America

Cents and Sensibility
Money tip of the day

Know your tax forms

- MarketWatch**
- NEW YORK** — When it comes to filing your income tax return, you have a lot of choices.
- In "Taxes 2005 for Dummies," authors Eric Tyson, David Silverman and Margaret Atkins Munro offer this advice: First, which form? The 1040EZ is the simplest. Use it if your finances are relatively simple. You are eligible if:
- You are single or married (filing jointly) and are not claiming any dependents.
 - You have income only from wages, salaries, tips, taxable scholarships or fellowship grants, unemployment compensation, dividends from the Alaska Permanent Fund and qualified state tuition program grants.
 - Your income does not include more than \$1,500 of taxable interest income from investments and other financial accounts.
 - Your adjusted gross income is less than \$50,000 (after deducting a maximum of \$7,500 if single or \$15,000 if married).
 - You are not receiving any advance earned income credit payments.
- You are not itemizing deductions or claiming any deductions on wages, salaries, tips, taxable scholarships or fellowship grants, pensions or annuities, taxable Social Security benefits, withdrawals from your IRA, unemployment compensation, interest and dividends.
- Your taxable income, after all allowable deductions, is less than \$50,000.
- You are not itemizing your deductions.
- The most complicated form is the 1040. Use it if you don't qualify for the others or if you have deductions that will allow you to pay less tax via this form. You must use 1040 if you:
- claim numerous tax credits;
 - own rental property;
 - are self-employed;
 - have sold a stock or bond in the past year.



EUROPEAN FORECAST

Benelux: Partly to mostly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s. Friday lows in the upper 20s to lower 30s.

Britain, Ireland: Partly to mostly cloudy. Highs in the 40s. Friday lows in the lower 30s.

Croatia and Bosnia: Mostly cloudy to cloudy with snow. Highs in the low 30s. Friday lows in the low 20s.

France: In the north, mostly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s. Friday lows in the upper 20s. In the south, mostly sunny. Highs in the 40s to mid 50s. Friday lows in the lower 30s.

Northern Germany: Mostly cloudy to cloudy with isolated snowflakes. Highs in the mid to upper 20s. Friday lows in the upper teens to mid 20s.

Southern Germany: Mostly cloudy to cloudy with snowflakes. Highs in the mid to upper 20s. Friday lows in the upper teens to lower 20s.

Hungary: Mostly cloudy with isolated snowflakes. Highs in the mid 30s. Friday lows in the lower 20s.

Northern Italy: Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s to low 50s. Friday lows in the mid 30s.

Southern Italy: Cloudy with rain showers. Highs in the mid 40s to lower 50s. Friday lows in the low to mid 30s.

Kosovo: Mostly cloudy to cloudy with isolated snowflakes. Highs in the upper 20s. Friday lows in the lower 20s.

Norway: Mostly cloudy with isolated snow and rain showers. Highs in the mid to upper 20s inland, low 40s on the coast. Friday lows in teens to low 20s.

Portugal, Spain: Sunny. In the north, highs in the upper 40s. Friday lows in the upper 20s to mid 30s. In the south, highs in the mid to upper 50s. Friday lows in the lower 30s to lower 40s.

Turkey: Partly to mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers along the coast. Highs in the lower 50s to mid 60s. Friday lows in the lower 40s to lower 50s, lower 30s inland.

KEY: Sunny Partly cloudy Mostly cloudy Cloudy Snow Rain Rain shower Snow Cold front Warm front Trough Occluded front Slant front Low High

AFRICA

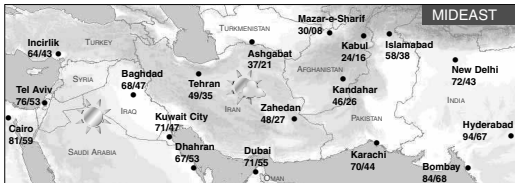
Cape Town	80	62	Mogadishu	89	75
Dakar	92	61	Nairobi	80	59
Freetown	87	75	Rabat	59	39
Windhoek	87	73	Tripoli	58	40

THE WORLD

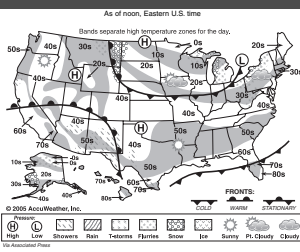
Amsterdam	39	29	Manila	88	72
Bahrain	69	51	Mexico City	76	46
Beijing	32	16	Montreal	33	01
Bombay	73	56	Panama	69	53
Buenos Aires	65	58	Rio de Janeiro	84	71
Calcutta	86	73	Singapore	28	28
Hanoi	55	14	Sofia	36	19
Hong Kong	74	54	Sydney	72	67
Jakarta	55	41	Tokyo	51	38

TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

Alabama	Hi	Lo	OK	Colorado	Hi	Lo
Alaska	46	39	City	Colorado Springs	45	24
Arizona	58	28	City	Denver	57	29
Arkansas	52	36	City	Fort Worth	57	29
California	54	17	City	Grand Rapids	57	29
Connecticut	52	36	City	Indianapolis	57	29
Delaware	52	36	City	Jacksonville	57	29
District of Columbia	52	36	City	Las Vegas	57	29
Florida	52	36	City	Los Angeles	57	29
Georgia	52	36	City	Madison	57	29
Hawaii	52	36	City	Memphis	57	29
Idaho	52	36	City	Minneapolis	57	29
Illinois	52	36	City	Mississippi	57	29
Indiana	52	36	City	Mobile	57	29
Iowa	52	36	City	Montgomery	57	29
Kansas	52	36	City			
Kentucky	52	36	City			
Louisiana	52	36	City			
Maine	52	36	City			
Maryland	52	36	City			
Massachusetts	52	36	City			
Michigan	52	36	City			
Minnesota	52	36	City			
Mississippi	52	36	City			
Missouri	52	36	City			
Montana	52	36	City			
Nebraska	52	36	City			
Nevada	52	36	City			
New Hampshire	52	36	City			
New Jersey	52	36	City			
New Mexico	52	36	City			
New York	52	36	City			
North Carolina	52	36	City			
North Dakota	52	36	City			
Ohio	52	36	City			
Oklahoma	52	36	City			
Oregon	52	36	City			
Pennsylvania	52	36	City			
Rhode Island	52	36	City			
South Carolina	52	36	City			
South Dakota	52	36	City			
Tennessee	52	36	City			
Texas	52	36	City			
Utah	52	36	City			
Vermont	52	36	City			
Virginia	52	36	City			
Washington	52	36	City			
West Virginia	52	36	City			
Wisconsin	52	36	City			
Wyoming	52	36	City			



THE UNITED STATES



Scheduled to

ETS

or

PCS

Check our Relocation Guide every Saturday to find Realtors at your new station.

STARS & STRIPES
Your Hometown Newspaper

Horoscope

Venus and Jupiter affect us with a heavenly flirtation. What a pleasant waste of time it is to tease and carry on with someone charismatic — or perhaps it's more productive than appearances suggest.

There's value in the confidence boost that comes with sophisticated social contact. Playfulness really is a fine art under the Gemini moon.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(February 17). This year is full of memorable occasions, thrilling twists in your life's plot and adventures just begging you to take them. So be daring, especially when unusual opportunities present themselves in the next three months. Couples exchange new promises in June. You're applauded for career success in July. Love signs are Scorpio and Cancer. Your lucky numbers are: 50, 8, 1, 24 and 35.

ARIES (March 21-April 19).

Personal ambitions are highlighted, set at least one goal that is entirely to satisfy yourself. Get the to-do list over with — you need a block of uninterrupted time to let your mind surf the collective unconscious.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20).

There's a foggy quality to your experiences now, which gives you a detached, almost amused air. A line of Edgar Allan Poe comes to mind: "All that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream."

GEMINI (May 21-June 21).

You're moving in a highly competitive environment. When others appear to be resting, they're merely waiting to pounce at the first opportunity they see. Be more strategic than the next guy.

CANCER (June 22-July 22).

Answers are simple, especially if the question has to do with your career. Does your work encompass the things you actually love doing? If not, there's an opportunity to remedy the situation.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).

You won't be the only one to benefit from

your own success. Once you know that others want you to succeed, you have a license to go for it with all your passion. Use all available channels to promote yourself.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

The pressure is off for the time being. Take the opportunity to enroll in a spinning class, learn Pilates or go for a run. When you get out in a healthy way, you meet new, sexy and exciting friends.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).

There's something comforting about a familiar mess. But you have too much to gain by clearing the clutter. Make a list of what to keep and what to throw out — you don't have to do it for real just yet if it's too hard.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).

Idle notions are the initial spark of luck. Making your mark is a matter of sheer concentration. Start by designating more time for planning and promoting. An artistic goal can be accomplished if you keep the faith.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

You'll have to crack down on personal discipline to win the prize. Strengthen all that's going well in your world. Write things down. Double-check. Plan thoroughly, and most of all, don't be quick to blame!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

You're on the go as usual, and the less baggage you have to carry, the better. By working in energetic spurts, you accomplish much. Take advantage of downtime in between by resting up.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

Matters related to home and family may feel unsettled. It's best not to think about what you don't have and start using what you do. A romantic relationship is right where it should be.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

Before the weekend starts, you'll have set love on a better course. Be sure to act on your romantic ideas, or they never become a part of your life. Shared activities will be the source of your greatest memories.

Creators Syndicate

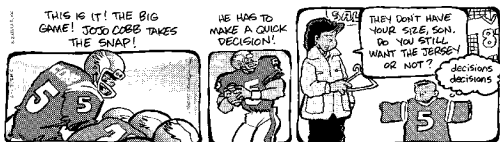
Holiday Mathis



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



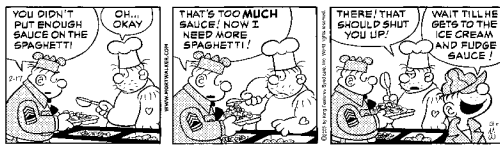
Cathy



Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



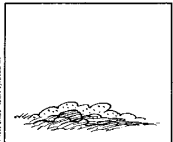
Red Rover



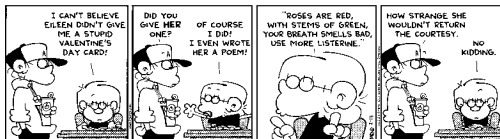
Better or Worse



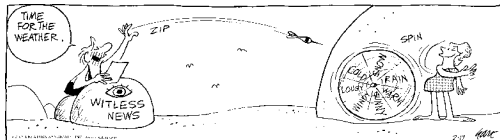
Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



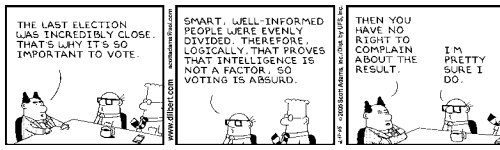
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



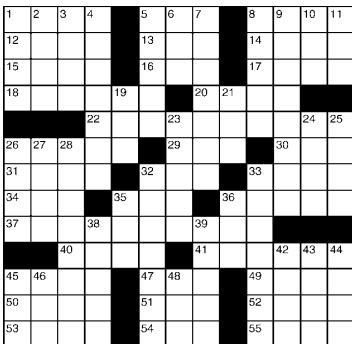
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



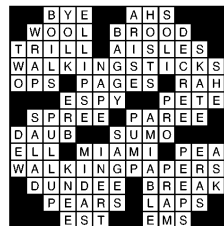
Across

- 1 Stylish
5 Sternward
8 Skewer
12 Frau's mate
13 Fresh
14 Mexican money
15 Largest of the seven
16 Turn right
17 Multitude
18 Dennis the Menace, e.g.
20 Unprepared
22 Joe's first line, often
26 Squamous
29 Monterey monarch
30 "There's -- in team"
31 Actress Skye
32 1-Across, to Austin Powers
33 Shakespeare sobriquet
34 Torched
35 Spotted
36 Retail division
37 Ornamental trinket
40 Huron's neighbor
41 Lone Ranger's steed
45 -- Hari
47 Make like a frog
49 Assistant
50 Leading man?
51 Idolater's emotion
52 Nullify

Down

- 3 "— and Circumstance"
54 Longing
55 Saxophone range
1 Burn somewhat
2 "For -- jolly good ..."
3 Rainbow
4 Fireplace noise
5 -- Saxon
6 Retainer
7 Made slight adjustments
8 Juan Carlos' kingdom
9 Private
10 Doctrine
11 "— Story"
19 Whatever amount
21 Firmament
23 Dentist's concern
24 Heart of the matter
25 "Bye Bye Birdie" song
26 Worms make it
27 Invent
28 Civil War battle site
32 Avail oneself profitably
33 Nut-and-honey pastry
35 Something to do at 39-Down
36 -- fi
38 Muscle woe
39 Colorado resort
42 String instrument
43 Tend texts
44 Start over
45 Chart
46 Commotion
48 Have bills

Answer to Previous Puzzle



2-17

CRYPTOQUIP

BE ILM'WO LMY CLLGBAV
ELW TCMYWOZ, YDOA
B WOSGLA ILM'WO LA J

ZSJTOAVOW DMAY
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I AM CERTAINLY THE MOST TANNED PERSON HERE TODAY. ALL OTHERS PALE IN COMPARISON.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals R

Fashion creates 'crack addicts'

Dear Abby: I have a 22-year-old daughter who insists on wearing low-rise jeans. I have seen half her rear end at least five times, and I'm embarrassed for her. I have had to tell her every time. When I do, she acts mad at me for saying something. Last October, she squatted down to look in a box at a yard sale, and the poor elderly gentleman who was trying to assist her had quite a view. It was awful! I wish I had a camera so I could take a picture. She says she doesn't care. How can that be?



Dear Abby

—Bummed-Out Mother, Brightwood, Va.

Dear Mother: Your daughter is a willing slave to fashion. It seems every generation has its own

erogenous zone on display. Remember the lyric, "In olden days, a glimpse of stocking was looked on as something shocking. Now Heaven knows, anything goes!" In the '60s it was the thigh. In the '90s it was exposed navel, adorned with gold rings. Today the fashion industry appears to have turned us into a nation of "crack addicts."

The trend will end only when God grants us the gift to see ourselves as others see us—in other words, "hind-sight."

Dear Abby: I have just had an upsetting experience. I walked into my local public library this morning to find a man angrily confronting one of the librarians. I don't understand, but there was no way to miss what he was saying because he was shouting.

Apparently, when it was his turn to be helped, he was on his cell phone and refused to hang

up. She informed him that she would help the next person in line, and then help him when he had finished his conversation. Part of his problem, according to him, was that he was so involved with his cell phone call that he hadn't heard what the librarian said! I don't see why she and the other people in line should have been expected to wait for him to finish his call, and I certainly don't understand why he felt entitled to intimidate this woman. Isn't it time for some rules of conduct for cell phone use?

—Courtesy, Please, in Springfield, Mo.

Dear C.P.: It should not be necessary to have written rules of conduct for cell phone users. Common sense and basic good manners should apply. The librarian was within her rights to take the next person in line if the one in front of her was preoccupied.

Letters for this column—with your name and phone number—should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69460, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uxpress.com/dearabby> Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

UNGTGS

GEWIH

DROAFE

LEMOTE

A: _____

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argiron



WHAT THE SHEPHERD DID WHEN THE MOTHER AND LAMBS STRAYED FROM THE FLOCK.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ARDOR MIRTH JOCKEY RANGING
Answer: When the knight made a snide remark, it resulted in a — "CRACK" IN HIS ARMOR

Honoring Martin Luther King Jr.

Dear Annie: In 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood in front of tens of thousands of Americans of all races and colors and shared his dream. In honor of Dr. King, a group of dedicated Americans is building the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial in Washington, D.C. This four-acre memorial will be situated on the Mall between our national memorials for Presidents Jefferson and Lincoln.



Annie's Mailbox

It will stand for Dr. King's ideals—peace, equality and freedom.

The project has raised over \$33 million, thanks to organizations such as General Motors, Tommy Hilf, the Ford Foundation, Fannie Mae, Aflac, Bell South, The Marriott Foundation, AOL-Time Warner, and individuals such as hip-hop star Nelly. We need to raise another \$33 million to break ground by the end of this year.

Dr. King spoke of "the fierce urgency of now." Here at the foundation, we feel that urgency as well, and ask for your help. Please ask your readers to visit www.buildthe-dream.org and give whatever they can. Every donation will help us make this dream a reality.

—Harry E. Johnson Sr., Wash., D.C.

Dear Harry Johnson: Thank you for giving us the opportunity to mention this project to our readers. Those who are interested should check your Web site or write to the Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation Inc., Department 211, Washington, D.C. 20055.

Dear Annie: My daughter is getting married soon, and I've always dreamed of walking my little girl down the aisle. However, my former wife says she

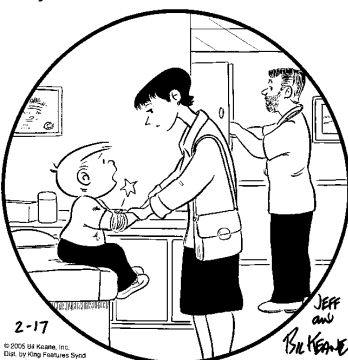
wants to walk our daughter down the aisle with me.

I do not want to appear selfish, but is this a new trend? My ex-wife left our family to pursue another guy when my daughter was a teenager, and I am not inclined to accommodate her. Is there a compromise?

—Heavyhearted in Michigan
Dear Michigan: Perhaps your ex-wife can walk her halfway while you walk her the rest of the way, or your daughter may opt to walk by herself, but this really is not your decision. Ask your daughter what SHE would like, and then whatever she chooses, please acquiesce. This day is not about your dreams, it's about hers, and one of them, undoubtedly, is that her parents get along in her wedding.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

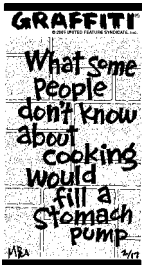
Family Circus



2-17

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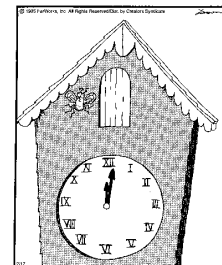
"Why do I have to get stitches? Grandma said, 'Time heals all wounds.'"



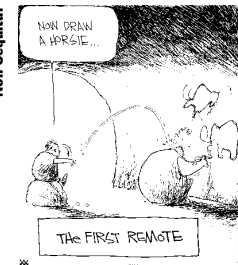
Demis the Menace



© Gary Larson



Non Sequitur



Questions about steroids hover as first camps open

BY RONALD BLUM
The Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — Not even the first day of pitchers and catchers could supplant the talk of steroids and syringes in baseball.

Steroids were the No. 1 topic Tuesday, when the new Washington Nationals, the New York Yankees and the Cincinnati Reds opened camp.

"It doesn't go away, unfortunately," Yankees manager Joe Torre said.

Seven more teams were to report to spring training Wednesday, and workouts begin Thursday — 45 days before the World Series champion Boston Red Sox and Yankees play the major league opener April 3. The Minnesota Twins will be the last team to report, on Sunday.

Ken Griffey Jr. ran for the Reds' medical staff in Sarasota, showing how far he has recovered from surgery on his torn right hamstring. Pedro Martinez, an early arrival in New York Mets' camp, worked out in Port St. Lucie. And Troy Nixon kept up the Yankees-Red Sox sniping, saying of Alex Rodriguez, "He can't stand up to [Derek] Jeter in my book or Bernie Williams or [Jorge] Posada."

The Nationals had the most contentious journey to spring training after 36 seasons as the Montreal Expos, the team morphed into Washington's first major league team since the expansion Senators became the Texas Rangers after the 1971 season.

Owned by Major League Baseball since early 2002, the team was uncertain of its fate for three seasons before the move to the nation's capital was finalized in December.

"It's been a long journey," catcher Brian Schneider said. "We've wanted this for a while, and it's here now. We're ready for it, that's for sure."

As camps opened, there was a new steroid report. The New York daily News said Tuesday that an FBI agent in Ann Arbor, Mich., told baseball security head



Author and former major leaguer Jose Canseco talks with radio hosts Rob Dibble and Kevin Kennedy about his book "Juiced: Wild Times, Rampant 'Roids, Smash Hits & How Baseball Got Big" on Tuesday during the debut of XM Satellite Radio's MLB Home Plate channel in Los Angeles.

Kevin Hallinan about 10 years ago that Jose Canseco and other players were using illegal anabolic steroids.

"I alerted Major League Baseball back in the time when we had a case, that Canseco was a heavy user and that they should be aware of it," Special Agent Greg Stejskal was quoted as saying. "I spoke to the people in their security office, Hallinan was one of the people I spoke to."

Calls to Stejskal's office in Ann Arbor and to FBI headquarters in Washington were referred to the Detroit FBI office, where spokeswoman Dawn Clemeney said Stejskal and the agency would have nothing to say.

"I don't think I was off-base with anything I said," Stejskal told the Daily News in Wednesday's editions.

Hallinan was traveling and didn't return telephone calls seeking comment. He told the News he never was contacted then about steroid use.

"I can't understand why Kevin reacted so vehemently, and I'm sorry that Kevin put himself in that position to be so angry," Stejskal said.

"I have absolute confidence in his integrity," Sandy Alderson, executive vice president for baseball operations in the commissioner's office, said of Hallinan. "We are looking into the situation described by the agent to see if we can figure out what exactly took place. There may have been someone else he talked to. There are a number of possibilities. We want to see if there is some reasonable view of his explanation and Kevin's."

Canseco's autobiography, published this week, accused the Yankees' Jason Giambi and others of using steroids.

"He's my biggest question mark this spring," Torre said. "We have to see what kind of player he is."

Still, baseball's new drug-testing agreement — calling for

harsher penalties and more frequent testing — remains in the drafting phase. Baseball management expects the new rules to be in place by the mandatory reporting date, March 1.

"I know that we were well on our way to having serious steroid testing, drug testing, and we still are and we didn't need a book to come out and tell us that we needed to do something," Nixon said.

Baltimore shortstop Miguel Tejada, among the players accused by Canseco, denied that he used steroids.

"Any inference made by Jose Canseco that I used steroids is complete false," Tejada said in a statement. "I barely knew Jose during his career, so it is ridiculous for him to suggest we ever had discussions regarding their use."

Gary Sheffield, who said last October he unwittingly used substances that contained steroids told the Daily News and New York Post at Yankees camp he

never admitted to using steroids.

"When people sit here and say I didn't know I took steroids — I didn't take steroids," he told the News for Wednesday's editions.

"The bottom line is I put rubbing cream on my leg, and if somebody says that the steroids, that's a bunch of hogwash."

"People are going to put a spin on whatever they're going to put a spin on. ... I'm not like Jason Giambi, I'm not going to sit here and cry about things being unfair or attacks are unfair."

Sheffield said Giambi will probably face some abuse from fans during the season.

"He has to go through it," Sheffield said of his teammate.

"He's the reason he's going through it, but that's part of it. I don't think anybody will give you pats on the back."

At Boston's camp in Fort Myers, Nixon wasted little time in adding some heat over baseball's most heated rivalry, joining Curt Schilling in criticizing Rodriguez.

"He's done some great things on the field. He's one of the best baseball players in the game and probably will be when it's all said and done," Nixon said. "But when people ask me about the Yankees, I tell them about Jeter and Bernie Williams and Posada. I don't tell them about Rodriguez."

Rodriguez's spokesman, Steve Fortunato, said he couldn't reach A-Rod for comment.

As for Griffey, the Reds will have a better idea of his strength and flexibility after he has a physical Wednesday. The 35-year-old center fielder tore the hamstring from the bone while making a sliding play in the outfield last August. Doctors reattached his hamstring using three screws.

Across the state, Martinez showed up at camp last week — 10 days early — and was back at the Mets' complex Tuesday, playing long toss on a minor league field before spending hours in the weight room.

"What really caught my attention the most is how hard they work — so serious," he said. "I know I'm going to get a full workout here. No nursing here."

Anaheim appeals injunction denial in Angels name change

The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Council members voted Tuesday to appeal a judge's refusal to grant a preliminary injunction to the city in its attempt to block the Angels from adding Los Angeles to their name.

The team, formerly the Anaheim Angels, is now called the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim. "We recognize that most preliminary appeals are not successful, but ... this decision merits further review because the city is pursuing every available legal means to obtain the benefits that were promised the people of Anaheim under



the contract in 1996," Mayor Curt Pringle said in a statement.

Superior Court Judge Peter Polos last month also denied a request for a temporary restraining order after the city sued the Angels, claiming the name switch would violate the team's lease of the stadium. The judge, however, said that the contract requires only that Anaheim be included in the name.

"We regret that Arte Moreno and the Anaheim Angels' manage-

ment have forced us to pursue this lawsuit and continue to explore him to reconsider this misguided marketing effort," Pringle said.

A phone call to Angels spokesman Tim Mead seeking comment was not immediately returned. The team has maintained that the new name would attract more fans, advertisers and broadcast contracts by emphasizing its connection to the nation's second-largest media market.

Mariners pitching prospect Blackley out for season

SEATTLE — Seattle Mariners pitching prospect Travis Blackley

will miss the entire season after having surgery last week to repair two tears in the labrum of his throwing shoulder.

Blackley was 1-3 with a 10.04 ERA last season before he was sent down to Triple-A Tacoma. The left-hander finished the season on the disabled list.

Doctors wanted Blackley to rest and rehabilitate the shoulder over the winter but his pain never went away. During an exam last week, renowned shoulder specialist Dr. Lewis Yocum determined surgery was needed.

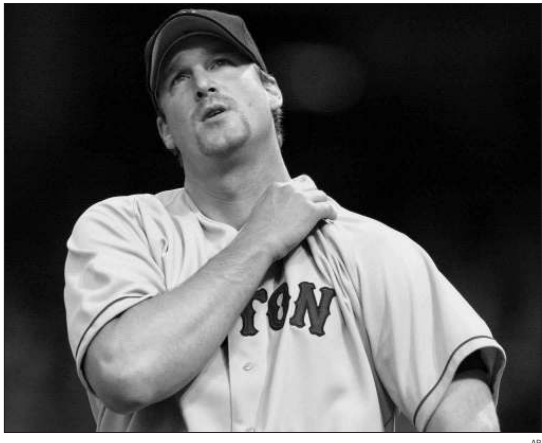
The 22-year-old Blackley was 17-3 in 2003 at Double-A San Antonio, and 8-6 with a 3.83 ERA last season for Tacoma.

Red Sox add reliever, infielder

FORT MYERS, Fla. — The Boston Red Sox signed right-handed reliever Denney Tomori, a 14-year veteran of baseball in Japan, and acquired infielder Alejandro Machado from the Washington Nationals on Tuesday.

Tomori, 37, agreed to a one-year minor-league contract with an invitation to the major-league team's spring training camp. In 360 games with three Japanese teams, he is 18-28 with 30 saves and a 3.96 ERA.

Machado, a 22-year-old switch hitter, was acquired for a player to be named or cash consideration.



Pitcher Derek Lowe, who won all three playoff clinchers in the Boston Red Sox's run to the World Series title last season, signed with the Los Angeles Dodgers as a free agent during the offseason.

Changing Sox

Series champs have new look for spring

BY HOWARD ULMAN
The Associated Press

FORT MYERS, Fla. — The championship banners have arrived, the pitcher who won all three clinching games in the postseason finally left and the Boston Red Sox face a season that will be far different than any since 1919. For the first time in 86 years, the Red Sox begin spring training as World Series winners — a status proclaimed by the banners hanging from lampposts outside of City of Palms Park. And they'll do it without Derek Lowe.

The Red Sox allowed the Fort Myers resident to train at the stadium. He threw his last pitches there Tuesday and planned to drive Wednesday to Vero Beach, home of the Los Angeles Dodgers — who signed him as a free agent.

He'll be just a spectator when the Red Sox open their season April 3 against the Yankees in New York.

"I'm going to be sitting in San Francisco watching them play on TV," Lowe said. "Now I'm a fan watching these guys play. Now you've got to watch [Curt] Schilling and [Randy] Johnson, opening night, Yankees-Red Sox, and not be part of it."

It won't be the same, just like the rest of the new season. Pedro Martinez left for the New York Mets and David Wells, Matt Clement and Wade Miller arrived to fill out the revamped rotation.

Edgar Renteria, who grounded into the last out of Boston's four-game World Series sweep against St. Louis, is the Red Sox new shortstop.

Right fielder Trot Nixon hopes the Red Sox's desire will be the same even after they won their championship with the greatest postseason comeback in baseball history.

"I'd be real disappointed if guys came in thinking" they could slack off, Nixon said. "Once January came around you, should realize that, hey, this is my profession. This is what I love to do. I don't want to play and then retire after winning a championship."

Even Lowe, who was disappointed with the way his seven full seasons with the Red Sox ended without a solid offer from the club, wished them well.

"You root for the guys," he said. "You hope they stay healthy. You hope they have a good year. You hope they get to the World Series. There's no bitterness toward the players because these guys are great guys."

"It wasn't their decision why [I'm] not here, so why wish bad things upon them?"

Manager Terry Francona said Tuesday "I was really proud of him" in the postseason and Lowe thanked the Red Sox for letting him work out in their stadium.

Their pitchers and catchers are due to report Thursday. The entire team is due in Monday, with the first full-squad workout next Tuesday.

Lowe figured his days were numbered back in July when the Red Sox shopped him around before the trading deadline. When he was left out of the playoff rotation, he had more incentive to finish his Boston career on a high note.

"In any profession, when somebody tells you you can't do something, it motivates you to go out there and prove that you can," Lowe said.

Nat's something he shares with his former teammates.

The Red Sox won the World Series, but baseball magazines have picked them to finish second in the AL East behind the Yankees for the eighth straight season. On paper, their rotation seems weaker than New York's.

Nixon was the only returning player from last year's championship team at the ballpark on Tuesday. Pitchers Miller and Matt Mantle, both acquired in the offseason, also have been working out. Miller is coming back from an injury-plagued season.

The heightened emphasis on steroids is another addition to spring training. Nixon is Boston's player representative and said the attention won't last long on Jose Canseco's book released this week in which he alleges steroid use by certain players.

"I don't care about Jose's book," he said. "It's another black eye for baseball a little bit, but I think it's just a black eye before spring training and the minute the boys start showing up for camp, it's going to be long gone and not talked about anymore."

Instead, Boston's focus will be on trying to win consecutive championships.

"I'm a greedy person. I want as many as I possibly can get," Nixon said. "I want to be one of those guys also that has an opportunity to take a picture and have four or five rings on my finger with this team."

Mets' Martinez hopes workouts will pay off

BY MIKE FITZPATRICK
The Associated Press

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. — Sitting atop a temporary locker in a minor league clubhouse was Pedro Martinez's bag.

"Just needed to bring my stuff," a smiling Martinez explained Tuesday. "I have my Mets bag."

He has a plan, too: to be in peak condition for his first season in New York.

That means the entire season, 30-plus starts, from frigid April through the hot summer and perhaps into the playoffs.

So the three-time Cy Young Award winner plunged into a rigorous workout regimen long before spring training, which officially begins Friday with the first scheduled practice for pitchers, catchers and players coming off injuries.

He showed up at camp last week — 10 days early — and was back at the Mets' complex Tuesday, playing long toss on a minor league field before spending hours in the weight room.

Already he's thrilled with New York's strength and conditioning program.

"What really caught my attention the most is how hard they work — so early," Martinez said.

"I know I'm going to get a full workout here. No nursing here." With a slight build at 5-foot-11, 170 pounds, the 33-year-old Martinez says his routine consists of little heavy lifting but lots of reps, designed to build arm strength and endurance.

He likes to throw every day and have three side sessions off a mound per week.

And this winter, he took only 21



Pedro Martinez shortened his offseason break this year.

days off after the season — usually he gives himself a month before getting back to work.

No doubt about it, Martinez is determined to make a good impression with the Mets after leaving Boston for a \$53 million, four-year contract. He's not going over National League scouting reports just yet, but is trying to develop a rapport with pitching coach Rick Peterson.

"I'm already settled," Martinez said. "It doesn't take much. It just takes a few practices."

Blessed with a baffling assortment of pitches — pinpoint fastball, knee-buckling curve and deceptive changeup — Martinez knows even the most talented pitchers must work harder as they age if they expect to keep winning.

He also knows he's going to command all kinds of attention in the Big Apple, even during the normally quiet days before spring training opens.

"I'm never used to fame. I'm never used to being an icon. But I'm here to deal with it," Martinez said. "I'm here to be watched, to be honest. It's part of the package and I understand."

For that, the Mets can surely forgive a Red Sox bag or two.

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Wake gets defensive in victory over Miami

The Associated Press

CORAL GABLES, Fla. — Wake Forest's potent offense misfired Tuesday night, so the Demon Deacons relied on defense for a change.

By holding Miami to 33 percent shooting in the second half, No. 5 Wake Forest won 68-63 to retain its lead in the Atlantic Coast Conference.

"We're used to running, scoring in the 80s and the 90s," guard Chris Paul said. "Tonight we did just enough to win. I think it really shows how far along our team is."

The Demon Deacons enjoyed their biggest lead at 61-53 with 4½ minutes left. Miami rallied and had one shot to tie, but Anthony Harris' 22-footer fell short with 5 seconds to go.

Wake Forest (22-3, 10-2) earned its sixth straight win, a streak that includes two victories over Miami (5-8, 6-6).

The Demon Deacons reached 10 conference victories for only the second time in the past eight seasons. The latest win came even though Wake Forest had its lowest point total since December, 18 points shy of its average of 86 per game.

"Usually we can score," coach Skip Prosser said. "Tonight when we didn't, our defense carried the day. It's nice to talk about the game we won because of how we guarded."

The Hurricanes shot 47 percent in the first half but finished at 39, shooting 12-for-36 in the second half. They finished 3-for-18 from three-point range after making 13 three-pointers in a loss at Wake Forest last month.

"We knew they were really good, three-point shooters," Demon Deacons center Eric Williams said. "We tried to take the three away from them. We just decided that if they wanted to drive, because we weren't going to give away any threes."

Williams and Paul each scored 13 points for the Demon Deacons, and Justin Gray added 11.

"They didn't have a great night shooting the ball, but found a way to win," Miami coach Frank Haith said. "That shows they're a top-notch team. They're experienced, and they come at you in waves — they're a deep ballclub."

Guillermo Diaz led the Hurricanes with 20 points. Harris added 14 but was limited to 23 minutes because of cramps. Robert Hite totaled six, 12 below his average.

Taron Downey hit a three-pointer to put Wake Forest ahead to stay, 47-44 midway through the

Men's Top 25 Roundup

second half. Gray's three-pointer made it 59-53, and Trent Strickland then scored to put the Demon Deacons up by eight points for the first time.

Hite intercepted a pass and made the ensuing layup to cut the margin to 63-59, and Diaz hit two free throws to make it 63-61 with 1:32 to go.

Paul sliced through the lane for a layup, and Diaz scored again for Miami to make it 63-63 with 20 seconds to go. Strickland made one of two free throws, but Harris missed over Jamaal Levy from beyond the top of the key.

"I saw that it was going straight to the goal, and I thought it might go in," Levy said. "But it came up short."

Gray sank two free throws with 3 seconds remaining to clinch the victory.

"We're playing right now like we have a lot to lose," Williams said. "We didn't come out squeaky clean, but we found a way to win. I think that's our mentality right now: We're fighting for something, and we're just going to keep fighting."

No. 19 Connecticut 84, Providence 89 (20T): Charlie Villanueva had 22 points and 10 rebounds to lead the visiting Huskies (16-6, 8-3 Big East), who scored the first seven points of the second overtime. Marcus Williams had 15 points and 13 assists and Josh Boone had 11 points and 10 rebounds for UConn, which was coming off a loss to then-No. 2 North Carolina.

The Huskies were again without leading scorer Rashad Anderson, who's hospitalized as he recovers from an infection in his leg.

Ryan Gomes, a first-team All-America last season as a junior, scored a career-high 37 points — including all of the Friars' 11 in the second overtime — to over the 2,000-point milestone in his career. Providence (11-14, 1-10) was coming off its only conference win of the season.

No. 25 Villanova 89, Bucknell 51: Allan Ray scored 23 points to lead the Wildcats (15-6) to their biggest win of the season just three days after they were handed their worst loss by No. 9 Syracuse.

Chris McNaughton had 17 points for the visiting Bisons (17-8), who beat then-No. 10 Pittsburgh and Saint Joseph's this season.

S. Carolina celebrates rare win over Kentucky

BY JACOB JORDAN

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Tarence Kinsey had such a good time during South Carolina's 73-61 upset of No. 3 Kentucky on Tuesday night he wanted a do-over.

"I wish we could play it again. I had fun tonight," said Kinsey, who scored 17 points.

Carlos Powell added 12 in the second half to lead the Gamecocks to the rare victory over the Wildcats. "It's the biggest win in my career," said Powell, a senior who is hoping to lead the Gamecocks to their second straight NCAA tournament.

It was the first home win for the Gamecocks (14-8, 6-5 Southeastern Conference) over the Wildcats (19-3, 10-1) since 1997, and it was just South Carolina's sixth victory in 41 meetings against Kentucky, which never looked in court.

Fans poured onto the scene after the victory, arguably South Carolina's best in coach Dave Odom's tenure, and Kinsey stood on press row, slapping high-fives with celebrating students.

He was later apologetic, saying he couldn't find his way to the locker room — but it was obvious he was overcome with excitement.

"They were going to run over me," he said with a smile.

The Wildcats, who had won 19 straight games against SEC opponents, had a season-high 21 turnovers, and Chuck Hayes was held to just one point. Keleena Azubuike led Kentucky with 16 points — five in the second half.

"You've got to make some shots. We had open threes," Kentucky coach Tubby Smith said.

The Wildcats shot just 26.1 percent (6-for-23) from behind the arc. They also struggled from the free-throw line, making 65.5 percent.

"It's frustrating," Azubuike said. "We can't get down on ourselves."

The near capacity crowd finally had something to cheer about after the Gamecocks' disappointing 74-71 home loss to Auburn on Saturday. South Carolina added a high-profile win as it attempts to build its NCAA tournament résumé. The Gamecocks were 4-4 against ranked opponents coming into Tuesday's matchup, but they still have a game against No. 18 Alabama on Saturday.

"I don't really know how that works," Tiasy said of making the tournament. But "we just got tired of losing close games."

The Gamecocks lost games to Kansas and Pittsburgh earlier this season, both by four points.

South Carolina built a 38-45 lead with 4:16 left after an 8-0 run and the Wildcats never seriously threatened again. The run featured a three-point play and dunk from Powell, the Gamecocks' leading scorer who had been held to just two points in the first half.

But South Carolina pounded the ball inside to Powell, and Kentucky had no answer. Powell also credited the Gamecocks' mix of defenses.

The Gamecocks built a 12-point lead on some key long-range shooting by Kinsey, who was averaging 9.5 points a game. His fourth three of the game brought the crowd to its feet midway through the second half. Kinsey finished with five threes, a career-high.

On the next trip down, he missed a three, but Antoine Tiasy followed with a dunk to cap a 13-2 run with 13:28 left in the first half.

It was Tiasy's best game of the season. He had played just 8 minutes in the past five games, and



South Carolina's Tarence Kinsey celebrates after hitting a three-pointer during the second half against Kentucky. Kinsey had 17 points in the upset.

didn't even make the trip to South Carolina's Jan. 29 game at Florida.

Odom told him Sunday it was time for him to get into the rotation, and he provided an energetic spark and 13 points off the bench.

"I don't know how many more chances you're going to get, but I'm going to give you one Tuesday night," Odom recalled telling the junior.

Kinsey couldn't make any key shots to get a run going in the second half, and could have been hung over from a sluggish nine-point win against Georgia over the weekend, after which Smith told his team he was ashamed of them.

"Coach Odom had his team ready to play. They pretty much outworked us in most areas and really controlled the tempo of the game," Smith said. "They just seemed like they wanted it more than we did."

Kinsey cut the lead to six with 10 minutes to go, but Rocky Trice's layup with 8:15 to go gave the Gamecocks a 48-38 lead.

Kinsey had 11 turnovers in the first half, which is just shy of the Wildcats' 12.9 average per game. They shot just 40 percent (8-for-20) from the field.

Smith tried to find a spark by benching his starters, which he did against Georgia last Saturday, but he didn't get the boost the Wildcats needed. Azubuike had 11 points in the first half, but Hayes was held to just a free throw.

The Gamecocks weren't much better, even though they led 25-23 at halftime. South Carolina shot 36.7 percent (11-for-30) from the field, including 2-for-10 on three-pointers.



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Heinrichs resigns as coach of U.S. women's soccer

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — April Heinrichs is resigning as the United States women's soccer coach, six months after leading the team to an Olympic gold medal.

The U.S. Soccer Federation said Tuesday that Heinrichs will remain as a consultant until the end of this year.

No replacement was immediately chosen. Assistant coaches Greg Ryan and Phil Wheddon will direct the team in the interim.

"There were a number of goals when I first stepped into this position five years ago," Heinrichs said in a statement released by the federation. "No one is a national team coach forever and for me personally, this is the right time to step away."

Heinrichs had a record of 87-17-20 capped by the gold medal last summer in the Athens Olympics. Her 124 games coached is a record.

She also was the head coach for the USA's third-place finish in the 2003 Women's World Cup and its second-place finish in the 2000 Olympics.

Heinrichs said the timing was right for a change.

"For the program moving forward, there is enough time for a new coach to prepare for the next Women's World Cup and Olympics," she said.

Sports briefs

The new coach is expected to build the program around younger players. Many of the stars of the team that won the World Cup in 1999, led by Mia Hamm, have either retired from international play or are close to retirement.

Neuheisel disputes claim that he was warned about lying

KENT, Wash. — Rick Neuheisel firmly disputed trial testimony by his University of Washington boss, who told jurors two weeks ago the football coach was warned in early 2003 that his lies couldn't be tolerated.

Neuheisel also insisted Tuesday, during his third full day on the stand in his King County Superior Court lawsuit against Washington and the NCAA, that then-athletic director Barbara Hedges knew he had spoken with the 2003 49ers in February 2003 about the team's head coaching job.

"In my mind, she knew," Neuheisel said.

He explained that he indicated "in code" to Hedges that he had interviewed for the job by saying, one day after the interview, "Barbara, all you need to know is that I was in San Francisco playing golf."

Neuheisel contends Washington administrators wrongly fired him in June 2003 under pressure from the NCAA.

He spent the entire day Tuesday under cross-examination by university lawyer Lou Peterson. Jurors also listened to two radio show interviews, one from Feb. 10, 2003, in which Neuheisel denied interviewing for the 49ers' job, and another from Feb. 13, in which he admitted he had lied and apologized.

School officials maintain Neuheisel was told after the 49ers' incident that more lies wouldn't be tolerated. They said he was fired for gambling on NCAA basketball and for initially lying about the gambling when questioned by NCAA investigators. He told the truth to the investigators later the same day.

Neuheisel is asking jurors to decide who they're going to believe. As the trial's first witness, Hedges said Neuheisel was clearly advised he was facing a serious issue after the 49ers' episode and she couldn't tolerate additional lies.

Yet during his turn on the stand, Neuheisel insisted otherwise.

"I had not lied to Barbara. She knew" about the 49ers' interview, he said.

Neuheisel also flatly rejected Peterson's suggestion that he was advised in mid-February 2003 by

then-university president Lee Huntsman that administrators would hold him to a high ethical standard.

"He didn't call me. ... I think I would have remembered a phone call with someone of Lee Huntsman's stature," Neuheisel testified. "I'm very comfortable telling you it did not happen."

The coach also disputed Hedges' testimony that he was told a written warning about his lies would be placed in his personnel file. Such a memo, Hedges testified, wouldn't have to be made public and would help Neuheisel avoid more embarrassment.

"Barbara Hedges never told me about a letter of reprimand. Not one time. Ever," Neuheisel said.

Hedges retired in January 2004.

Sorensten files for divorce

Annikka Sorensten, the No. 1 player in women's golf and one of the most famous female athletes in the world, has filed for divorce from David Esch, her husband of eight years.

"I want to confirm that I have filed for divorce," Sorensten said in a statement released to The Associated Press on Tuesday.

"We are working toward an amicable resolution and we appreciate the media's respect for our privacy. I wish David nothing but the best for the future."

Golfweek magazine reported the divorce was filed Feb. 4 in Circuit Court of Orange County, not far from where Sorensten and Esch live in the gated community of Lake Nona. The suit has been sealed, and no other details were available.

Sorensten had hinted at early retirement in recent years, saying she might want to start a family.

But rumors that the marriage was rocky began last year when Esch, highly visible throughout Sorensten's career, stopped traveling as frequently. Esch began to work in real estate near their summer home in Incline Village, Nev. They have been separated the last two months.

He was last seen at the Samung World Championship in Palm Desert, Calif., in October, when Sorensten shot 67 in the final round to win.

Four-time Olympic swimming champion Popov retiring

MOSCOW — Four-time Olympic champion Alexander Popov is retiring.

The 33-year-old Popov reached the decision last month while at a short-course World Cup meet in Moscow, the ITR-STAR news agency reported Wednesday.

He won the 50 and 100 meters at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and 1996 Atlanta Olympics, the first repeat 100 champion since Johnny Weissmuller in 1924-28.

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Magic's Howard growing into a star

BY MARK HEISLER

Los Angeles Times

ORLANDO, Fla. — Childhood, it was nice while it lasted.

Dwight Howard was 18 years old, 6-foot-8½, and still growing, 240 pounds and already living in the weight room, when the Orlando Magic made him the first pick in last spring's NBA Draft and he dazzled everyone at his first news conference.

"Please, Dwight, don't lose that winning smile," went a headline in an Orlando newspaper the next day.

And he didn't, for the first five weeks of his rookie season, anyway.

On Dec. 8, Howard's 19th birthday, he was averaging a double-double, 10.9 points, 10.4 rebounds. That was a higher scoring average than Kevin Garnett had his rookie year and the highest rookie rebound average ever.

The next night, after getting three shots and missing them all in a loss to the Miami Heat, Howard said he was "kind of upset" he wasn't getting the ball.

"We talked to him," Orlando General Manager John Weisbrod said. "I sort of like that, actually, because it was him being hungry to get to the next level and be better as a player immediately."

"You know, he came in at the beginning of the season and was very happy to be here and I'll rebound and block shots. And as he got more and more comfortable, he started sort of feeling his oats a little bit."

"I take the fact that he was hungry to get the ball and sort of stand up to his teammates about being involved in the offense and not just cleaning up the garbage on the offensive glass as a good indicator of his hunger to make the next step."

A lot has changed in the nine years since Garnett jumped from the hardwood to the pros and started a movement.

Then it was considered daring. A year later when Kobe Bryant became the first perimeter player to try it, it was considered foolhardy. Now it's a way of life, with a record eight school players going in the last draft's first round — five in the lottery.

Howard was a good student whose parents both worked at the Atlanta high school he attended, but now even elite players with his background don't consider college.

Only three colleges bothered to recruit Howard in his senior year.

North Carolina's Roy Williams

was the only one from outside Georgia, showing Howard a briefcase containing 26 NCAA and conference title rings won by players he coached. The two he didn't have on him, he explained, were Michael Jordan's.

Not that that made it more difficult for Howard.

"I've been wanting to go to the NBA out of high school since I was young, 2 years old," he said.

Meanwhile, NBA general managers, who used to wince at the thought of scouting high school games, see most of their peers at some now.

In 1996, Indiana President Donnie Walsh was publicly skeptical of Bryant's ability to make the jump.

In 1998, Walsh drafted Al Harrington out of Elizabeth (N.J.) St. Patrick's High. And in 1999, he traded Antonio Davis, one of his mainstays, for Jonathan Bender of Plaquemine (Miss.) Memorial High.

That's where the league is," Walsh said, "and there's a good side and a downside to that."

"The young players are not at the level of Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, Larry Bird right now. Talent-wise, they are. And to be honest, I think

there's probably 25 of them in the league that are at that talent level. The future of the league is just awesome but it's going to take time for these kids to have their day."

"I think you just have to understand, these kids aren't aware of the profession yet so there's going to be mistakes, and I wouldn't get all twisted up about it."

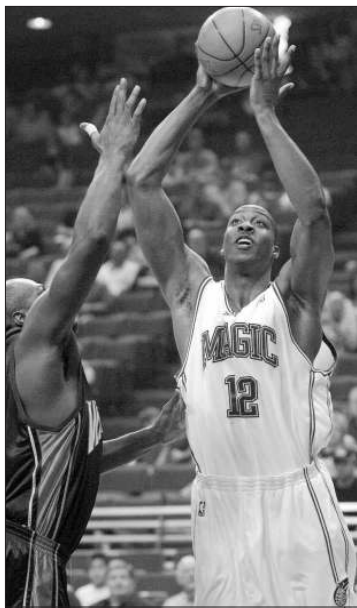
Despite the controversial nature of the issue, it doesn't happen just in basketball, but across the board.

Once the NFL bans high school players. Since the origin of its draft in the 1960s, baseball has drafted players out of high school, as has the NHL. Freddy Adu joined Major League Soccer at 14. The new sensation in tennis is 15-year-old Donald Young, whom Nike just signed to an endorsement contract.

From the NBA's perspective, it's no longer a question of whether it's good or bad. Everyone has to learn to deal with it.

Aside from the McDonald's Classic replacing the NCAA tournament, the marquee event on the pre-draft circuit, it means some teams will get great steals, such as the Los Angeles Lakers trading for the No. 13 pick that be-

came no longer a question of whether it's good or bad. Everyone has to learn to deal with it.



Magic rookie forward Dwight Howard, right, falls just short of averaging a double-double. The No. 1 overall pick has shown he is ready for the rigors of the NBA despite coming straight from high school.

is still a Wizards reserve.

And there will be great angst, such as what the Bulls experienced with Tyson Chandler and Eddy Curry, the Nos. 2 and 4 picks in 2001, who took so long to develop. The team was listening to offers for Curry until both young players suddenly began putting it together this season.

For the Magic, faced with a choice between University of Connecticut junior Emeka Okafor and Howard, it was a classic dilemma.

Weisbrod had the advantage of a hockey background (he played for the New York Rangers and worked for the New Jersey Devils before moving into arena administration and crossing over to the basketball side), and had dealt with high school prospects.

However, he also had a team at a low ebb.

On one hand, he could take Okafor to get immediate help and cheer up the local franchise player, Tracy McGrady, who was noticeably unhappy and a year from free agency.

On the other hand, after McGrady expressed disinterest, they could go another way: Trade McGrady and make the choice on its own merits.

"It wasn't a difficult perception of who we thought would be the better player three or four years down the road," Weisbrod said. "We just thought the upside in Dwight was so tremendous."

"What made it difficult was that obviously we were making this selection at a time when our team was awful, when we were coming off a 21-win season and being the worst team in the NBA. If ever there's a situation that screams for a need for immediate help, that was it. . . ."

"We stepped back and decided to reach our ultimate goal, which is obviously winning a championship, we were going to need a lot of other pieces and the difference between the two players' readiness in their first year was not a smart reason to go for the shorter-term fix."

With Okafor averaging 15 points and 11 rebounds in Charlotte, the decision is still debated in Orlando, but that's what the new era is all about.

Waiting and seeing

Howard is as straight as arrows come, a born-again Christian who attended Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy, where they didn't call the dance at the end of the

year a "prom" because that sounded too secular.

He's hard-working, poised, soft-spoken and nice as can be — so nice that he gave Weisbrod pause.

"Probably the one thing that stands out when you talk to him is he's such a nice kid and he's such a good kid, you wonder about him having the killer instinct and the real competitive desire to take guys on," Weisbrod said.

"But he's really done a good job in dealing with that, not that in his mind it was anything he had to deal with. Even though he's not a sort of loud, aggressive-type person, he takes a lot of pride in his performance, sort of like a Tim Duncan in terms of his temperament."

"He's a quiet kid and very professional and doesn't come off as necessarily the type of guy that wants to cut your heart out, but he does."

It was a good sign when Howard came back from summer ball, in which he had done well, said he had been pushed around too much and threw himself into weightlifting.

Since the draft, the team says he has grown nearly an inch, to 6-9, and is up to 262 pounds.

It was an extremely good sign when he waded in and began rebounding like a grown man in camp. He was in the starting lineup on opening night and never looked back.

It's not a game anymore, and it's not just a job, either. It's a lifestyle. Aside from games, practices and trips, Howard is surrounded by a support system.

A 24-year-old cousin lives with him and hangs out with him on the road. A chef hired by the team comes in to cook so Howard gets the 5,200 calories a day a growing young power forward needs. The Magic conditioning coach and the team's big-man assistant coach, Clifford Ray, are in constant contact.

"Everything I expected in the NBA, that's what it is," Howard said. "It's a grind. It's a lot of hard work that you've got to put in. Ever- . . ."

"It's fun. It's also a lot of work, but it's fun. It's something that I asked for. I have faith that God won't put me in positions to mess me up or make me fail. It's something that I learned and something I want to keep working at."

Of course, it is just the beginning.

Last spring, Howard, his father and an Atlanta Journal-Constitution reporter who spent 10 months observing Dwight's metamorphosis visited the set of TNT's NBA studio show.

Magic Johnson gave Dwight advice, and Charles Barkley was Charles Barkley.

Pointing to a young woman, Barkley said, "Now this is what you can't mess with. They'll be after you, and don't think it's because you're good-looking. It's who you are."

"You tell them, Charles," Dwight's father said.

SPORTS



Olowokandi's contributions
help McHale get his first victory
as Minnesota's coach, Page 31

Ice capades end in lost season

With owners, players \$6.5 M apart on cap ceiling, sides can't make a deal

BY IRA PODELL
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The NHL canceled what little was left of the season Wednesday after a series of last-minute offers were rejected on the final day of negotiations.

A lockout over a salary cap shut down the game before it started in October. Now the NHL, already low on the popularity scale in the United States, becomes the first major pro sports league in North America to lose an entire season to a labor dispute.

"As I stand before you today, it is my sad duty to announce ... it no longer is practical to conduct even an abbreviated season," Commissioner Gary Bettman said. "Accordingly, I have no choice but to announce the formal cancellation of play for 2004-05.

"This is a sad, regrettable day that all of us wish could have been avoided."

Bettman said the sides would continue working to get an agreement.

"We're planning to have hockey next season," he said.

The union scheduled a news conference later Wednesday in Toronto.

"The scary part now for hockey is do the fans come back? We're not baseball, we're not the national pastime," Nashville Predators forward Jim McKenzie said.

The league and players' union traded a flurry of proposals and letters Tuesday night, but could never agree on a cap. The players proposed \$49 million per team; the owners said \$42.5 million.

"We weren't as close as people were speculating," Bettman said.

This will be the first time the Stanley Cup isn't awarded since 1919 when a flu epidemic forced the cancellation of the season.

■ Text of Bettman's statement canceling the season, Page 28



NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman, who represents the owners, said during his news conference on Wednesday that he found it difficult to negotiate with a group that was unaware of the league's economics.

the finals to be called off. There was a lockout in 1994-95 that ended in time for teams to play 48 games, still more than half the regular season.

"We profoundly regret the suf-

fering this has caused our fans, our business partners and the thousands of people who depend on our industry for their livelihoods," Bettman said.

"If you want to know how I feel,



Buffalo Sabres defenseman Jay McKee, the team's representative on the players' union, said Tuesday he was not consulted and that NHLPA chief Bob Goodenow did not inform him of the union's changed position on a salary cap.

I'll summarize it in one word — terrible."

Before Monday, the idea of a salary cap was a deal-breaker for the players' association, but the union gave in and said it would accept one when the NHL dropped its insistence that there be a link between revenues and player costs.

That still wasn't enough to end the lockout that started on Sept. 16 and ultimately wipes out the 1,230-game schedule and the playoffs.

Responding to the union's last offer on Tuesday, Bettman said in his second letter of the day to NHLPA executive director Bob



Chicago Blackhawks forward Matthew Barnaby was dismayed about why the players' union accepted a salary cap five months into the lockout. "Something like that you think might have been able to get done in the summer," Barnaby said Tuesday.

Goodenow, "If every team spent to the \$49 million ... total player compensation would exceed what we spent last season. We cannot afford your proposal."

Goodenow disputed Bettman's claim in a letter, taking a hard-line stance and replying, "You will receive nothing further from us."

"Clubs are spending significantly less than your team payroll limit number of \$42.5 million," Goodenow said in his second letter. "I am at a loss to understand how

you suggest your offer earlier today represents a \$75 million dollar increase when it only impacts the spending of nine teams!"

"The scary part now for hockey is do the fans come back? We're not baseball, we're not the national pastime."

Jim McKenzie
Nashville Predators forward

**Top draft pick
Howard
making
the jump from
preps to pros
a success**

Page 30



Sox open unique camp; steroids still MLB's hot topic

Pages 25, 26



**Armstrong's
quest for a
7th straight
Tour de France
title is a go
this summer**

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No. 3 Kentucky falls at South Carolina; Wake edges Miami

Page 27